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ḤAṬ Ḥ L-YAMAN

"BREEZES FROM YEMEN"

PART I

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH WITH LINGUISTICAL
AND CRITICAL NOTES

JOHN G. HALL, D. D., PH.D., LL.D.

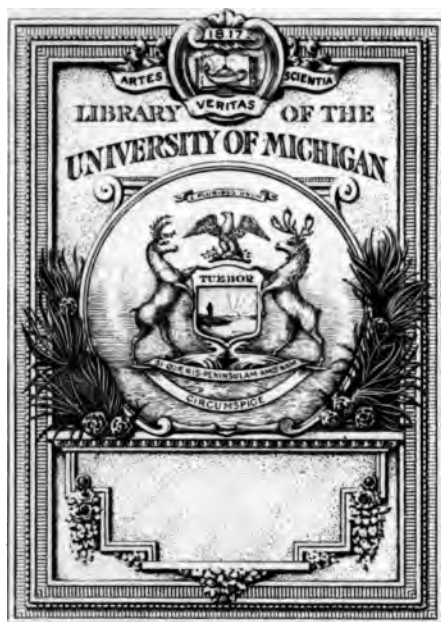
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al-Shirwānī, Ahmad ibn Muḥammad

NAFHAT U 'L-YAMAN

“BREEZES FROM YEMEN”

PART I.

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH WITH PHILOLOGICAL
AND CRITICAL NOTES

BY

LIEUT.-COLONEL D. C. PHILLOTT,

Secretary to the Board of Examiners.

إِنْ تَجِدْ عَيْبًا فَسَدَّ الْخَلَلَ • جَلَّ مَنْ لَا عَيْبَ فِيهِ وَعَلَا

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

The *Nafhat** 'l-Yaman or "Breezes from Yemen," for close on a century a text-book for the Higher Standard and High Proficiency, Arabic, was first published in 1811, under the patronage of the old College of Fort William. Lumsden, the College Professor of Arabic and Persian, in his preface to the original edition writes :—

"Desirous to substitute for these grave and severe exercises the more attractive study of poetry, history and general literature, I solicited and obtained from the College Council the liberty of employing the aid of a learned Arab, Shykh Ahmud, a native of Yumun, who is now attached to the College establishment. Added to an extensive acquaintance with the Arabian poets, this mna boasts, in his own person, of no inconsiderable talents for poetry; and some original pieces of his composition are published in the course of the following work. The work itself, wholly compiled under his inspection, consists of a selection of easy stories, followed by a body of poetry, generally selected from the works of the best authors. To these are subjoined a collection of proverbs, and moral axioms; and the whole, it is hoped, will be found to answer the purpose intended, namely, that of furnishing a useful class book, such as may contribute something to the amusement as well as the instruction of the reader."

The present translation, based on one by Mr. R. P. Dewhurst, I.C.S., to whose abilities the present work and many students of Arabic are greatly indebted, claims to be merely a fairly literal translation of the First Part of the "Breezes," that is, the "Selection of Easy Stories," which forms that portion formerly prescribed as part of the course for the

Higher Standard, and which is still prescribed for the High Proficiency. The stories are interesting, and, being short, do not strain the attention of the beginner. Their style, though simple, is very idiomatic; they are in the language of the polished classes of the court of the *Khalīfahs*, and are rich in idioms and colloquialisms that contain many a pit-fall, the 'obvious' translation being usually the wrong one. In the English translation, the ambiguous pronoun "he" has been purposely retained, the object being, not only to assist the beginner in reading the Arabic text, but also to provide him with a suitable exercise-book for translating back into Arabic. With this intent, numerous footnotes on words in the Arabic text have been given, and in some cases common words or idioms, derived from the same root, have been added. It is, too, hoped that the work will be of some interest to Indian students, by whom the *Nafḥat* is much read.

Seven stories of Lumsden's original text have been omitted in the Arabic reprint by the Board of Examiners. As these stories are somewhat Rabelaisian in flavour, I have decided to omit them.

My acknowledgments are due to Mr. R. F. Azoo, Arabic Instructor of the Board of Examiners, not only for constant tuition and valuable assistance in this translation, but also for much help in the correction of the proofs; without his assistance, indeed, this little work would never have seen the light.

INDIAN MUSEUM,)
CALCUTTA :)
April 1907.)

D. C. P.

NAFHAT^U L-YAMAN.

PART I.

STORY No. 1.

It is said that 'Abd^u-l-Malik^u 'bn^u Marwān was one day preaching in *Kāfah*, when a man of the tribe of *Sam'ān* stood up and said: "Listen,¹ O Prince of the Faithful! Do justice to this my companion and then continue thy preaching!" He asked, "What is the matter?" He answered, "People have said to him that none but so and so (*i.e.*, the speaker) can have the wrong done to thee by *Abd^u-l-Malik* redressed,² so I have brought him to thee in order that I may see thy justice, which thou didst promise us before thou didst assume³ the office of redressing grievances."⁴ So argument became protracted between them,⁵ and the man exclaimed: "O Prince of the Faithful! you order but you do not conform (to your order); you prohibit others from

¹ مَهْلًا *lit.* "Gently!"

² ظَلَامَةً "Some right, or due, taken wrongfully."

خَلَّصَ "To save or free from a snare."

³ تَوَلَّى—fr. يَتَوَلَّى "To rule." وَالِي "Governor."

⁴ مَطَالِمُ pl. of مَظْلَمَةٌ = ظَلَامَةٌ (note 2). انْظُرْ فِي الْمَطَالِمِ "The office of examining into wrongful exactions, *i.e.*, in those days the Khalifate."

⁵ طَالَ الْكَلَامُ = "They argued long," *lit.* "Words became extended or protracted."

wrong but do not yourself abstain from doing it¹; you admonish others but do not act on your admonition. Tell me, are we to imitate² your personal example, or act on your oral orders?³ If you say, 'Obey our order and accept our advice,' (then I say) how can he who deceives himself counsel another? and if you say, 'Take wisdom wheresoever ye find it and follow admonition⁴ from whomsoever ye hear it,' then why have we placed in your hands the reins of our affairs and made you the arbiter of our lives and property? Know you not that there are among us men with a greater command of language, and more eloquent than you in discourse?⁵ If you are too weak to administer the justice required of the Imāmship, then let it go and undo its fetters. Then will hasten to it those that have a right to it,⁶ whom you have hunted down⁷ everywhere and scattered⁸ in every valley. Now, I swear by God, that if the Imāmship remain in your hands till the coming of the end (of the world), and till the expiry of Time, then divine and human rights would disappear from the world." "In what way?" asked the *Khalīfah*. He said: "Because every one

¹ **بَنَيْ** "To prohibit, forbid." **إِنْتَهَى** "To abstain."

² **قُدْرَةً—بِقُدِّي، اِقْتَدَى** "Good example; pattern."

³ i.e., "Not issuing from the heart."

⁴ **وَعظاً**; also "Sermon." From **عَظَّ**.

⁵ **فِي الْعِطَاتِ**. Pl. of **عِطَة**.

⁶ **أَهْلِهَا** *lit.* "Its own people." This refers to the family of the Prophet.

⁷ **قَاتَلَ** "To fight with."

⁸ **أَشْيَاءَ شَتَّى** "To disperse." **شَتَّى** "Various things."

who addresses you as to his rights, is rebuked ; and he who remains silent about his right loses¹ ; neither is his appeal² heard, nor is his wrong redressed, nor is the one who has wronged him checked. Now there is between thee and thy subjects a settling place where even mountains will melt away ; where thy kingdom will be obscure, and thy power pass away, and thy helper fail³ thee, and where thy Judge is just." Then 'Abd-'l-Malik fell prostrate on his face and wept : after a little while he said to him, " What needest thou ? " He answered, " Thy Governor in *Samāwah* has oppressed me. His nights are pleasure and his days are naught,⁴ while his very glance is pride." So the *Khalifah* wrote to him to restore to the man what had been extorted, and then deposed that Governor.

STORY NO. 2.

A certain man of letters has related : " An Ambassador⁵ of the King of the Greeks once came to the Court of⁶ *Al-Mutawakkil*, and I met him.⁷ And when wine was

¹ قَهَرَ " Is oppressed " : by his property being taken.

² قَوْل " Words, speech."

³ خَذَلَ " To forsake, desert ; fail to aid."

⁴ لَفْوَ " That in which is nothing good."

⁵ Ambassador رَسُول : mod. Ar. سَفِير.

⁶ حَضَرَ عِنْدَهُ

⁷ اجْتَمَعَ بِ

brought in¹ he (the Ambassador) said, 'How is it,² O ye³ Muslims, that while wine and the flesh of the pig have been made unlawful for you in your Book, you act⁴ according to the prohibition regarding one of them, and not⁵ regarding the other?' I said to him, 'I, at any rate, do not drink wine, so question one that does.' He said, 'I will tell thee if thou wishest.' I said to him, 'Say on.' So he said, 'When the flesh of the pig was made unlawful for you, you found a substitute superior⁶ to it, the flesh of birds; whereas in the case of wine you could find nothing to approach it,⁷ and so did not abstain⁸ from it.' The narrator continues,⁹ "I felt shame before him and knew not how to answer him."

STORY No. 3.

Muḥammad-'bn* Ibrāhīm* 'l-Mauṣilīy* has said, "We passed,¹⁰ in one of our journeys, by a tribe¹¹ of Arabs, and among them was a man extremely ugly, squint-eyed, with a long white beard, who was beating a wife of his, a maiden

¹ Passive of أَحْضَرَ

² مَا لَكُمْ "How is it that you?" also مَا بِالْكُمْ

³ معاشر : sing or pl. may be used.

⁴ فعل

⁵ دون

⁶ خَيْر pos. form used as elative.

⁷ خَيْر is feminine : hu should be hā.

⁸ نَهَى عَنْ To forbid. اِنتَهَى عَنْ "To abstain from."

⁹ قَال - ¹⁰ عَبَّرَ - اِجْتَازَ

¹¹ حَمِي "Tribe"; also, "encampment."

as beauteous as the full moon. So we sprang up to stop him from beating her, but she exclaimed: 'Leave him alone, for he has done some virtuous act¹ in the sight of God, while I have committed some sin; so God hath made me his reward and him my punishment.' ”²

STORY No. 4.

It is said that *Karīm*-l-Mulk* was a man of wit and learning, and that he passed³ one day beneath a garden balcony and saw a maiden of such beauteous face and surpassing loveliness that none can describe her. Now⁴ when he had gazed at her, he became bereft of his senses, and his heart⁵ flew away.⁶ He returned to his lodging and sent to her a choice gift by the hand of⁷ an aged dame, who was in his service. Now, that damsel could read.⁸ So he wrote to her a letter proposing⁹ a meeting in her balcony. Now when she saw the letter, she accepted the gift, and sent to him, by the hand of the old woman, some ambergris on a buckle of gold,¹⁰ and she tied it up in a handkerchief, and said, "This is the reply to his letter."

¹ *أَسَدَى إِلَيْهِ مَعْرُوفًا*; aor. *يُسَدِّي*, "To do good." He did him a favour.

² *عَقَابَ* and *ثَوَابَ*. To reward, *أَثَابَ*. To punish, *عَاقَبَ*.

³ *Vide* page 4, note 10. ⁴ Now *فَ*.

⁵ *قَلْبُ* or *لُبُّ*. ⁶ Full stop = *فَ*.

⁷ *بِيدٍ* or *بِعَ*. ⁸ *كَانَتْ قَارِئَةً*. ⁹ Offering *مَرْضُوعَةٍ*.

¹⁰ *Zirr* and *zurr*, "button"; pl. *أَزْرَارَ*. *Zur* "Visit," imp. from *زَارَ* aor. *يُزِيرُ*. An example of the Figure *جَنَابِي* or *تَجَنِّيَسِي*—

But when *Karīm*-l-Mulk* saw it, he failed to solve its meaning, and was much perplexed.¹ Now he had a daughter of tender years, and she, seeing him bewildered by this, said, "O father,² I understand its meaning." He exclaimed, "And what is it, clever little thing?"³ She then began saying⁴ :—

"She has presented thee with amber, and inside it a gold⁵ button with its soldering concealed.

And the meaning of the button and the amber is, 'Visit me thus hidden in the dark.'"

The narrator adds that he was amazed at her facility of expression and acuteness.

STORY No. 5.

It is said that one night *Ar-Rashīd* was restless,⁶ and it occurred to him to open the chambers of his hand-maidens and divert himself in them.⁷ So he opened a

¹ *Lit.* "He was perplexed in his affair."

² يَا أَبَتِ "O my father!" also يَا أَبْنَاءَ and يَا أُمَّةَ "O mother!"

³ اللَّهُ دَرَكِي An expression of admiration—"the milk that you have drunk is divine." لِلَّهِ دَرَكٌ فَارِسًا or مِنْ فَارِسٍ "What an excellent horseman he is!"

⁴ أَنشَأَ يَبْكِي aor. يُنْشِئُ— "To make something new, compose"

"He began to weep."

⁵ ذُبُرٌ properly "Gold dust."

فَلَقِيَ = حَصَلَ لَهُ قَلَقٌ

⁷ يَنْزِلُ فِيهِمْ cannot apply to persons; هُنَّ therefore refers to 'chambers.' This use of this pronoun for inanimate things though

chamber and his glance fell upon a maiden whom he found asleep veiled in her hair. He awoke her, and as soon as she felt that some one¹ was there, she opened her eyes and saw the *Khalīfah*, and exclaimed, "O, trusted of God! What is the matter?" He answered her, "It is a guest that has come² to your land by night; will you entertain him until morning?" She replied, "Gladly, my lord, and if he thinks me worthy,³ I will serve him, and with my ears and eyes."

So when daybreak came, the *Khalīfah* asked, "What poet is present at the gate?" "*Abū Nu'ās*," he was told. He said, "Bring him to me." So he came in, and the *Khalīfah* said to him, "Complete⁴ this verse, 'O trusted of God, what is the matter?'" The narrator continues, "So he bent down his head for a while and, raising it, recited, saying:—

"Long was my night when sleeplessness smote⁵ me, and I reflected (what to do), and a good thought came to me.

rare, is not absolutely ungrammatical. *يَتَنَزَّلُ بِالنَّظَرِ إِلَيْهِنَّ* would refer to the maidens.

¹ *عَلِمَتْ بِهِ*, "She knew that he was there." Correct Arabic.

The Caliph being already mentioned in the story, the narrator refers to him as a person known, although the girl herself did not know that it was he.

² *طَرَقَ* "To visit at night." *طَارِقَةٌ* pl. *طَارِقَاتُ* "Things that happen at night, calamities."

³ *رَضِيَ* Poetical license for *رَضِيَ* -

⁴ *يُجَيِّزُ, أَجَازَ* "To complete a verse."

⁵ *وَإِنِّي (يُؤَنِّي, وَفَنِي)*, *lit.* "To come to."

⁶ *Lit.* "I did well as to my thinking."

I said to myself,¹ 'I will walk ²for a while in my usual place of exercise, and then ³go about the private apartments,'
 And lo! a face comely and beautiful, beautified by the Merciful from amongst mankind.
 So I touched her foot⁴ to wake her, and she looked ⁵towards me and gazed at me steadily.
 Then she made a gesture saying to me, 'O trusted of God!
 What is the matter?'
 I said, 'It is a guest that has come by night to your land, will you receive him until the morning?'
 She answered: 'Gladly, my Lord; I will serve the guest with my ears and eyes.'

The narrator continues, "The *Khalifah* looked towards him and exclaimed 'I swear by God that thou wast with us.' 'No,' said he, 'by thy life, O Prince of the Faithful! It was but my poetical feeling which forced⁶ me to it.' The *Khalifah* was amazed at him, and gave him a handsome reward."⁷

STORY No. 6.

It is said that a guest once came to visit⁸ a certain miser, while he had before him bread and a cup containing⁹

¹ قلت in the text is an error for قلت.

² مَجَال, from جَال "To roam about."

³ سَاعَةً أُخْرَى = أُخْرَى.

⁴ الرجل منها Poetical, "the foot which is part of her."

⁵ نَظَرْنَا "To gaze steadily."

⁶ أَجْبَأ "To force; to compel to take shelter."

⁷ مِلَّةٌ A gift, reward (from وَصَلَ).

⁸ سَأَلَ عَلَيْهِ ⁹ فِيهِ. lit. "asked permission to enter in to him."

honey. So the miser removed¹ the bread, and was on the point of removing² the honey, when it struck him that his guest would not eat honey³ without bread. So he said, "Dost thou think⁴ that thou canst eat honey without bread?" "Yes," he replied, and began licking⁵ it up rapidly.⁶ So the miser said to him, "My brother, I swear to thee by God, this causes the heart to burn." The guest answered, "You are right⁷ but it is thy heart⁸ (that it burns)."

STORY No. 7.

Abū Bakr Ibn al-Khāzibah has related that he was one night sitting, copying some traditions after a portion of the night⁹ had past, "And," said he, "I was straitened in circumstances."¹⁰ Now there came out a large mouse¹¹ and it

¹ رَفَعَ "To take away, to remove."

³ أَرَادَ ; also "To wish, desire."

⁵ In Arabic with the article, العسل.

⁴ أَنْتَرَاكَ from أَرَيْتُ. "Thinkest thou?" Also "Tell thou me."

⁵ لَعِقَ "To lick up with the finger." مَلَعَقَةً "Spoon."

⁶ لَعَقَهُ بَعْدَ لَعَقَةٍ "Lick after lick."

⁷ صَدَقَ "To be true ; say the truth." صَدَّقَ "To believe."

⁸ قَلْبَكَ Accus. ; obj. of يُحْرِقُ understood.

⁹ جَزْءٌ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ ; and commoner. ضَيْقُ الْيَدِ.¹⁰

¹¹ فَارَةٌ "Mouse or rat." In mod. Ar., only applied to a mouse.

A rat is جَرَدٌ

began running about¹ the room, and² after a time³ another came out, and they both began playing about in front of me⁴ and jumping on each other,⁵ until they approached the light of the lamp, and one of them came forward. Now I had before me a cup, and I turned it⁶ over the mouse; and its companion came and smelt the cup, and began going round the cup and beating herself against it, while I looked on in silence, busy with my copying. Then it entered its hole,⁷ and after a time came out with a good dinar in its mouth and left it in front of me. So I looked at it (the mouse) and kept silent and busied myself with my copying, and it sat in front of me for a time looking at me, and then went back and brought another dinar, and sat again for a time, while I watched silently and copied; and it continued going and coming until it had brought four or five dinars, --I am doubtful which,⁸—and then sat for a longer time than on any previous occasion. After this it went back again and entered its hole, and came out with a piece of leather⁹ in its mouth that had contained the dinars, and left it on the top of the dinars. Then I under-

¹ يَعدو مَدًا ;

² إِذَا gives the idea of the second one coming out, while the first was still in the act of running about.

³ سَاعَةً ; also "Hour." "Clock, watch."

⁴ بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ

⁵ قَفَزَ "To jump." تَقَافَزُوا "They vied with one another in jumping." تَقَامَلَ chiefly denotes what is *reciprocally* done by two or more.

⁶ This should be كَبَبْتُهَا from كَبَّ "To invert, turn down." أَكَبَّ is intrans., "To bend down, stoop."

⁷ مَرَبٍّ "Den, burrow; subterranean passage."

⁸ الشَّكُّ مِنِّي.

⁹ جُلْدَةٌ diminutive of جُلْدَةٌ

stood that it had got no more, so I lifted the cup, and they both jumped away and entered their home, and I took the dinars and spent¹ them on a certain business²; and each dinar was equal to a dinar and a quarter."

STORY No. 8.

It is related concerning *Abu'l-Hasan*, of Baghdād, that he said, "*Al-Mutanabbī* was once seated at *Wāsiṭ*, and his son, *Al-Muḥassad*,³ was standing in his presence, while a company of persons were reading. Someone came up to *Al-Mutanabbī* and said to him, "I wish you to complete⁴ for us this line:—

'My love visited me in the darkness, desiring it to be secret,⁵
And we two were exposed to view⁶ by the light of her countenance in the darkness.'

Al-Mutanabbī raised his head and said, "O *Muḥassad*, he has brought thee the left hand, give thou him the 'right.'" So *Al-Muḥassad* said:—

"Then we took refuge in the darkness⁷ of her hair, which covered us from the eyes of fault-finders."⁸

¹ أَنْفَقَ "To spend." نَفَقَةً "Expenditure; means of sustenance."

سُوقٌ نَافِقٌ "Brisk market."

مُهَمِّمٌ²

³ الْمُحَسَّدُ "The Much-envied."

⁴ Vide page 7, note 4.

⁵ سَتَرٌ "Covering; concealment."

⁶ اِئْتَفَحَ "To be exposed; disgraced." فَضَحَ "To expose; to disgrace."

⁷ حَنَائِصُ pl. of حَنْدِيسٌ "darkness." "The plural denotes intensity."

⁸ يَلُومُ pl. of لَؤْمٌ from لَامٌ "To blame, censure."

The Professor¹ *Abu'l-Jawā'iz* has said, "The meaning of his saying to his son, 'He has brought thee the left hand, give thou him the right,' is this, that work is not² carried out with the left hand; but it is with the right hand that works are carried out, and *Al-Mutanabbī* meant that 'The meaning admits³ of amplification. So amplify it.'⁴ And they displayed their cleverness,⁵ the one in giving the hint, and the other in understanding it."

STORY No. 9.

As-Saqatīy narrates: "I entered a graveyard⁶ and saw *Buhlūl*, the madman, dangling⁷ his feet in a freshly-dug grave and playing with the earth. So I said to him, 'What art thou doing here?' He answered, 'I am with people who do not injure⁸ their neighbours; and who, if I am absent from them, do not backbite me.'⁹ Then I said, 'Art thou

¹ الرَّئِيسُ "Chieftain," a title applied to famous professors.

² يَتِمُّ - تَمَّ "To be completed, or perfected."

³ حَمَلَ يَحْتَمِلُ, اِحْتَمَلَ "to bear."

⁴ فَأَوْرَدَهَا "So bring it, mention it."

⁵ أَحْسَنَ and أَجَاد are synonyms: "To do well, or excellently."

⁶ مَقَابِرُ pl. of مَقْبَرٌ and مَقْبَرَةٌ "Place of the graves."

⁷ يُدَلِّي, أَدَلَّى Orig. "To let down the bucket (دَلْوٌ) into the well."

⁸ يُؤْذِي, أَذَى "To do what annoys or hurts."

⁹ يَغْتَابُ, اِغْتَابَ "To speak evil of one in his absence."

hungry?' He replied, 'No; I swear by God.' I said to him, 'Bread has become dear.' He answered, 'I care not: ¹ it is incumbent on us² that we worship Him as He has commanded us, and upon *Him* that He sustain us as He has promised us.'"

STORY No. 10.

It is said that *Anūshirwān* caused tables to be spread³ for the public on a ⁴ New Year's Day, and took his seat, and the nobles of the kingdom entered the hall.⁵ Now, when they had finished eating, wine was brought, and fruits and sweet herbs⁶ in vessels⁷ of gold and silver; and when the appanages⁸ of the feast were removed, one of those present took a gold cup weighing a thousand *miṣqāl* and concealed it⁹ beneath his garments, while *Anūshirwān* watched him. When the cup-bearer missed it, he called out in a loud voice, "Let no one go out until he be searched." The *Kisra* asked, "Why?" So he acquainted him with the matter. The monarch exclaimed, "One has taken it who will not return

¹ لَا أَتَالِي. ² يَتَبَتُّ عَلَيْنَا = عَلَيْنَا "It rests upon us."

³ وَفَعَّ الْمَوَائِدَ: مَوَائِدُ pl. of مَائِدَة "A table with food upon it."

Also applied to a table itself.

⁴ If definite, it would be فِي يَوْمِ النِّيرُوزِ. ⁵ ف = stop.

⁶ مَشْمُوم "Any sweet-smelling plant," from شَمَّ "To smell."

⁷ أَوَانٍ pl. of إِنَاءٌ. Pl. of pl. أَوَانٍ.

⁸ أَلَكْ; also "Instrument, utensil." It is both sing. and pl. in idea.

⁹ خَبَأَ: يَخْبِئُ خَبْئًا "To hide one's self." خَبَاءٌ "A hair tent."

it; and one has seen him who will not tell of him.¹ Therefore let no one be searched." So the man took the cup and went and broke² it, and made³ it into a belt and into an ornament for his sword, and he had made for himself new gorgeous⁴ raiment. When another occasion for the king to sit in public came round, this man went in ornamented thus. The *Kisra* called to him and said, "Does this come from that?" And the man kissed the ground and said, "Yes, may God Almighty bless thee."⁵

STORY No. 11.

It is said, When Mūsa'bn^u 'Imrān⁶ (on whom be peace!) fled from Pharaoh and arrived in the land of Midian, he was seized with fever⁷ and afterwards he hungered.⁸ So he complained unto his Lord (Great be his Glory) and said, "O my Lord,⁹ I am a stranger (in the land) and sick and

¹ نَمَّ، نَمَّ "To spread about reports." نَمِيمَةً "Slander, calumny."

نَمَّامُ "Tale-bearer, slanderer." ² "Broke it."

³ صَاغَ or. بَصَّغَ "He made or moulded an ornament, by the goldsmith's art." صَالِغٌ "goldsmith."

⁴ جَدَّدَ "To make something new."

⁵ This figure is a variety of تَعْرِيفٌ, or enigmatical speech.

⁶ Moses the Prophet.

⁷ حُمَّى: حُمَّى subs. fem., Pl. حُمَيَاتُ "He was attacked with fever."

⁸ أَصَابَهُ الْجُوعُ "He was affected by hunger."

⁹ يَا رَبِّي shortened from يَا رَبِّي.

poor." So God Almighty made revelation unto¹ him, saying, "Knowest thou not who is a stranger and who is sick and who is poor? The stranger is he who has no friend like Me; the sick is he that has no physician like Me; and the poor is he that has no provider² like Me."

STORY No. 12.

Ibn Da*b* has related of *Riyāḥ* 'bn* Ḥabīb Al-ʿAmirīy* that he once questioned him about *Lailā* and *Majnūn*. So he answered that *Lailā* belonged to the tribe of *Ḥarīsh* and was the daughter of *Mahdīy* 'bn* Sa'dī 'bnī Mahdīyī 'bnī Rabi'atā bnī 'l-Ḥarīsh*. She was one of the most beautiful of women and one of the most admirable in body and mind, and the most skilled in learning, and most lovely in form. *Majnūn* was fond³ of talking to women and a lover⁴ of their society. So when tidings of *Lailā* reached him, and she was described to him, he longed⁵ to see her and resolved to meet her. So he made preparation⁶ for this and set out to her, and he approached her and saluted her. So she returned his salutation, and asked many kind questions⁷ on everyday matters, and he sat with her and they talked

¹ كَلَّمَ : رَحَى : "revelation." ² وَكَيْلٌ : "a guardian." ³ كَلَّمَ

⁴ مَبِّ : "Longing lover." مَبِّ : "To be in love," also "To pour out."

⁵ مَبِّ aor. يَصْبُو : "To yearn towards, long for."

⁶ تَأَمَّب : "To make preparations" أَمْبَةُ الْحَرْبِ : "Accoutrements of war."

⁷ تَحَقَّتْ فِي الْمَسَلَّةِ : بَالِغٌ = تَحَقَّى : "She made much enquiry respecting him."

together, studying each other¹ and full of admiration² for each other. In this manner they continued until evening came,³ and he returned to his people and passed a long long night⁴ through longing for her, so that as soon as day broke, he returned to her and left her not until nightfall.⁵ Then he returned to his people and passed a night longer than the first, trying to dose but⁶ without avail. So he began to⁷ repeat these verses :—

“My day is like the day of the rest of mankind, until, when night appears⁸ my couch⁹ makes me long¹⁰ for thee.”

I pass my day in talking and in longings¹¹ but¹² a uniter (i.e., something)¹³ unites me and sorrow in the night.

In sooth love for thee hath sprung up in my heart, as the fingers have sprung up from the palms.”¹⁴

¹ *أَقْبَلَ* from *مَقِيلٌ عَلَى* “To show regard for,” “To turn the face towards.” Here as a sign of mutual regard.

² *أَعْجَبَ* passive. *عَجَبٌ* and *تَعْجَبٌ* wonder ; admiration.

³ *Lit.* “Until they entered upon the time of evening.”

⁴ *Lit.* “The longest night (he had ever passed).”

⁵ *حَتَّى* *أَمْسَى* (see note 8).

⁶ *يَهْجَعُ* aor. *يَهْجَعُ*. “To slumber lightly, dose.”

⁷ *أَنْشَأَ*, followed by an aor., means “To begin to say or do.”

⁸ *يَبْدُو* aor., *يَبْدُو* “To appear.” *يَبْدَأُ* aor. *يَبْدَأُ* “To begin.”

⁹ *مَفَاجِعُ* pl. of *مَضْجَعٌ* “a bed.” *يَسْطِجِعُ* “To lay ; to sleep.”

¹⁰ *هَزَّ* “to shake ; put into a state of commotion.” “To stir or excite.”

¹¹ *مَنْى* pl. of *مَنْى* “Wish, desire.” *تَمَنَّى* “To wish, long for.”

¹² “And.” ¹³ Here, his love or longing for her.

¹⁴ *رَاحَةُ* “Palm of the hand.” Also “rest, quietude.”

STORY No. 13.

It is related that *Ar-Rashīd* had a handmaiden to whom he was greatly attached, and she was a black,¹ and her name was *Khālīṣah*; and she was sitting one day² in his presence adorned with jewels and pearls such as God Almighty pleases,³ and he never left her night or day.² Now *Abū Nu'ās* came in before him and eulogised him in some forcible verses, but he paid no attention to him and remained occupied with the girl. So *Abū Nu'ās* felt 'sold'⁴ and went out and wrote upon the door of *Ar-Rashīd* :—

"Verily my verse is wasted⁵ upon your door, as a necklace is wasted upon *Khālīṣah*."

And one of the King's *entourage*⁶ read this and went in and acquainted him with it. So he said, "Bring hither *Abū Nu'ās* to me."⁷ When he came in through the door, he rubbed out the hollow of the letter 'ain from the two places in which the word "*Zā'a*" [is wasted] occurred, leaving the upper part of them just like a *hamza*. Then he appeared before the king, and the latter said to him, "What hast

¹ A Negress زَنْجِيَّةٌ, Abyssinian حَبَشِيَّةٌ; سوداء may be either.

² The order of the clauses in the Arabic is incorrect.

³ i.e., a great number: a common idea.

⁴ غَبْنٌ "The feeling of a man who has been defrauded."

⁵ فُتِيَ "To be lost," أَضَاعَ "To lose": فُتْيَا "Loss."—فُتْيَا pl. of فُتْيَا "Villages."

⁶ حَاشِيَةٌ, sing. having a pl. sense.

⁷ عَلَيَّ بِهِ.

thou written upon the door?" He replied, "I have written :—

'Verily, my verse gets brilliancy¹ from you,² as a necklace worn by *Khalifah* does from her.' "

So this pleased *Ar-Rashid* and he gave him³ a thousand dirhams; and one of those present exclaimed, "This line had its eyes⁴ plucked out and yet it saw."

STORY No. 14.

It is said that *Ar-Rashid* once swore not to go in to one of his handmaidens for a fixed period.⁵ Now he was fond of her. The time passed without her attempting to conciliate him⁶; so he said in verse :—

"He turned from me⁷ when he saw me infatuated, and prolonged his indifference⁸ when he perceived my infatuation.

He was my slave but now has become my master. This is one of the wonders⁹ of the age."

¹ يَضُوءٌ — ضَاءٌ "To shine."

² على بابكم does not mean "on your door" as at first sight it might appear, but = in praise of you.

³ أَجَارَ "To grant" جَائِزَةٌ "Present, reward."

⁴ Play on the word عَيْنٌ which means "an eye," and the letter ع; an example of *Jinās* and of the figure *Muwārabah* مَرَابِطَة.

⁵ أَيَّامًا "a certain number of days."

⁶ يَسْتَرْفِي — يَسْتَرْفِي ⁷ صَدَّ عَنْ

⁸ أَطَالَ الصَّبْرَ "was long patient." ⁹ أَعْجَبَتْ pl. of أَعْجَبَتْ

Then he called for *Abu-l-'Atāhiyah* and said to him,
 "Complete these lines." So he said :—

"The ascendancy of love shewed him my abasement in his love and fair
 is his face.

Therefore have I become a slave to him, and therefore has my case¹
 become known and notorious."²

STORY No. 15.

It is said that *Imra'-l-Qais* before his death entrusted³
 some armour⁴ and arms to *As-Samau'al*-bn*-Ādiyā*. Then
 the king of *Kindah* sent someone to demand the coats of
 mail and the arms that had been entrusted to him.
As-Samau'al replied, "I will not give them⁵ up, except to him
 who is entitled to them," and he declined to hand over any
 one of them to him. Then the king repeated his request,⁶
 but he refused and said, "I will not be false to⁷ my trust,
 nor betray⁸ my charge and abandon the good faith that is
 incumbent on me." So this king advanced against him⁹ with
 his army, and *As-Samau'al* went within his stronghold and

¹ مَا بِي Lit. "What is in me," i.e., my love for him, or what
 I felt towards him.

² عَلَن "To be openly known."

³ وَدَيْعَةً — أَرَدَع "deposit; trust." ⁴ دُرُوع pl. of دَرَع, fem.

⁵ يَدْفَع, دَفَعَ ⁶ عَادَدَهُ "Spoke to him again."

⁷ يَغْدُر, غَدَرَ بِ ⁸ يَخُون, خَانَ

⁹ يَقْصِدُ, قَصَدَ "To go toward or to." قَهَّدَ الْعَدُوَّ "To advance
 against an enemy."

defended himself within it.¹ So this king besieged him. Now *As-Samau'al* had a son outside the stronghold, so the king laid hands on him² and took him prisoner. Then the king went round the stronghold and cried out to *As-Samau'al*; and when he saw him appear above the walls,³ he spoke to him, saying, "Here is thy son, whom I have taken prisoner. Now if thou wilt make over to me the armour and arms that thou hast belonging to *Imra'-l-Qais*, I will depart and deliver to thee thy son; but if thou dost refuse to do that, I will kill thy son before thine eyes.⁴ Choose⁵ which of the two thou pleasest." *As-Samau'al* answered him saying, "I will not violate⁶ my trust nor nullify my faith, so do what thou pleasest." So he killed his son while he was looking on, and afterwards when he found himself unable to take the stronghold⁷ he returned disappointed. Thus *As-Samau'al* bore the death of his son with resignation,⁸ and did so in order to preserve his faith. When the season of pilgrimage came and the heirs of *Imra'-l-Qais* appeared, he made over to them the armour and arms, and considered the preserva-

¹ *إِمْتَنَعَ مِنْ* "An impregnable fortress." *حَصْنٌ مَنِيعٌ* — *إِمْتَنَعَ*
 "To refuse."

² *ظَفَرَ بِ* "To find or seize unexpectedly."

³ Lit. "From the top of the fortress."

⁴ *وَأَنْتَ تَنْظُرُ* Lit. "Whilst you are looking on."

⁵ *يَخْتَارُ*, *إِخْتَارَ* "To choose."

⁶ *خَفَرَ*; also "To guard."

⁷ *عَجَزَ مِنَ الْحَصَنِ*.

⁸ *إِحْتَسَبَ* "Reckoned (that by bearing it patiently God would reward him); laid up a reward with God by being patient."

tion of his trust and the guarding of his faith dearer to him than the life of his son and his worldly existence. So *As-Samau'al* has become proverbial for good faith,¹ and when any are praised for fidelity among men,² he is first named.

STORY No. 16.

It is told of *Al-Aṣmaʿī* that he said, "I once entered the desert and encountered³ an old woman,⁴ who had before her a slain sheep⁵ and by her side a wolf cub.⁶ She said to me, 'Knowest thou what is this?' I said, 'No.' She said: 'This is a wolf's cub, which we took when it was small and brought into our house and nurtured;⁷ and when it grew big, it did to my sheep what thou seest.' And she recited, saying in verse:—

'Thou hast killed my dear sheep⁸ and grieved⁹ my children and thou a foster-child¹⁰ to our sheep.

¹ Lit. "Proverbs on good faith were coined in the name of *As-Samau'al*."

² *أَنَامٌ*

³ Lit. "When behold! there was, etc."

⁴ *عَجُوزٌ* "old woman" and *شَيْخٌ* "old man." In Egypt an old man is called *عَجُوزٌ*.

⁵ *شَاةٌ* "Sheep or goat, but more commonly the former."

⁶ *جُرُوءٌ* "Cub, whelp (of a dog, lion, etc.)."

⁷ *رَبَّيْتُ*, inf. *تَرْبِيَةٌ* "To bring up." Cf. note 10.

⁸ *شَوْبَةٌ* diminutive (for affection) of *شَاةٌ*.

⁹ *فَجَعٌ* "To give pain." pl. *فَوَاجِعٌ* "great calamity."

¹⁰ *رَبَّبٌ* — *رَبٌّ* "To nourish, bring up a child."

With her milk wast thou nourished,¹ yet thou hast acted treacherously to her. Who told thee² that thy father was a wolf?

When the nature is a nature of evil, neither teaching nor the teacher profiteth aught.”

Like this, too, is the saying of another composer³ :—

“He who acts kindly to one unworthy encounters what befell the rescuer⁴ of *Umm-ʿAmir* (the hyena).”⁵

Another story is told by the same man to the following effect⁶ :—“I was once in the presence of *Ar-Rashīd*, when a man entered with a slave-girl for sale. So *Ar-Rashīd* looked at her attentively and then said, ‘Lead away thy slave-girl:’⁷ if she had not had freckles⁸ on her face, I would have bought her from thee.’ So when it was time to go, she exclaimed, ‘O Prince of the Faithful, suffer⁹ me to

¹ غَذِيَ “To be nourished,” passive of غَذَا “To nourish.”

² أَنْبَأَ (here changed to أَنْبَى by poetical license), “to inform.”
نَبَأَ “News; information.” نَبِيٌّ “a prophet.”

³ Lit. “Of the one who says.” قَالَ شَعْرًا “To compose poetry.”
جَارٌ from أَجَارُ يُجِيرُ “To give protection to.”
“neighbour.”

⁴ It is said that a party of Arab youths once chased a hyena, which took refuge in the tent of a desert Arab; the latter refused to give it up, since it had sought his protection. A short time after, as the Arab was asleep, the hyena tore open his bowels.

⁵ وَعِنْدَهُ إِذَا قَالَ the subject of قَالَ is the person referred to in the pron. هُ, i.e., الأصمعي.

⁶ Lit. “Take thy slave-girl by the hand.” كَلَّفَ.

⁷ وَذَرَّ (in the sense of فَتَرَ) a verb used only in the imperfect and imperative. ذَرْنِي “Let me, allow me.”

repeat a couplet¹ which has occurred² to me.' So he had her brought back. She then said:—

'The gazelle is not free from flaws in spite of³ its beauty, no, nor the full moon which all praise.

For the gazelle has a noticeable flatness of the nose⁴ and on the moon are spots, which all can see.'

So her eloquence delighted the *Khalifah* and he bought her, and raised her⁵ station, and she became to him the dearest of his handmaidens."⁶

STORY No. 17.

It is said that *Al-Haitham bn'r-Rabi'* was an eloquent, cowardly⁷ and lying fellow who had a sword dubbed "the spittle of death,"⁸ which differed not a whit from wood.⁹ He related: "There appeared before me a gazelle. I shot at it, but it turned away¹⁰ from my arrow, and the

¹ بيت two half lines; بيتان, a couplet, i.e., two lines rhyming.

² حَضَرَتْ "It occurred to him; presented itself to his mind."

³ عَلَى

⁴ خَنْسُ "flatness of the nose." أَخْنَسُ "flat-nosed" خَنْسَاءُ fem.

⁵ قَرَّبَ مَذَلَّتَهُ "To raise the position of anybody at Court."

⁶ وَصَائِفُ pl. of وَصِيفَةٌ "a young servant-girl."

⁷ جَبَانٌ — جَبِيْنٌ "cowardice." جُبْنٌ and جُبْنٌ "cheese."

⁸ لُعَابُ الْمَيِّتَةِ The death-dealing sword, as though death's spittle has 'the virtue of snakes.'

⁹ i.e., it could not cut.

¹⁰ رَاغَ, يَرُوغُ "To turn aside from a straight course."

arrow followed ¹ it; and it turned (again) and the arrow followed it, and I swear by God, it went on turning and the arrow following it until it felled it to the ground.”² A neighbour of his has also told a story, saying, that one night a dog came into his (*i.e.*, the coward’s) house and he imagined it to be a thief and drew ³ his sword and stood in the middle of the house (*i.e.*, in the courtyard) and said, “O thou, who hast been deceived ⁴ as to our power of resistance and hast ventured ⁵ against us, bad indeed ⁶ is what thou hast chosen for thyself, —little good and a polished sword. Come forth and thou shalt be forgiven, otherwise will I enter to thee and punish thee. By God, if I were to call against thee the tribe of *Qais*, thou couldst not stand thy ground against them.”⁷ Who are the *Qais*? They would fill for thee the plain with horse-soldiers and foot-soldiers.” Then the dog came out, and the man exclaimed, “Praise be to God who hath changed ⁸ thee (*i.e.*, the thief) into a dog and spared ⁹ us a war.”

¹ عَارَضَ “To come alongside of.”

² صَرَعَ — صَرَعَ “wrestling.”

³ بَنَنْصِي, إِنَنْصِي; “To draw a sword; to take off (clothes).”

⁴ فَرَّ “To deceive.” إِفْتَرَّ “To be deceived, or to deceive one’s self.”

⁵ جَرَأَةً — اجْتَرَأَ “boldness.”

⁶ وَاللَّهِ By God, indeed.

⁷ يَقُومُ, قَامَ لَهُ.

⁸ مَسَخَ, inf. n. مَسَخَ “To metamorphose the body into a worse form.” تَنَاسَخَ “Transmigration of souls.”

⁹ كَفَّى, كَفَى “He spared him the trouble of the thing.”

STORY No. 18.

It is told of *Mukhāriq*, the singer, that he related: "I once¹ went as an uninvited guest,² and my doing so cost³ *Al-Mu'tasim*, the Prince of the Faithful, a hundred thousand dirhams." And when he was asked how that happened, he answered, "I was drinking one night with *Al-Mu'tasim* until morning, and when day dawned I said to him, 'O my lord, if the Prince of the Faithful thinks fit to give me leave to go out and take the air⁴ in *Ar-Ruṣāfah*⁵ until such time as the Prince of the Faithful may awake.⁶⁻⁷' He assented and ordered the door-keepers to let me go out, so I began to walk about in *Ar-Ruṣāfah*, and while I was doing so, I saw a maiden, so beautiful that it was as though the sun were rising from her face, so I followed her. Now she had with her a basket, and she stopped and bought from a fruit-seller a quince, a pomegranate, and a pear, paying for each a dirham. So I continued following her, and she turned round, and seeing me following behind her exclaimed, 'Go back, son of a fool, lest some one see thee and thou be killed.' After some time⁸ she again turned and looked at me, and

¹ تَطْفِيلَةٌ noun of unity: expresses 'once.'

² The verb تَطَفَّلَ is derived from طَفِيلٌ the name of a man who used to go uninvited to banquets.

³ قَامَ عَلَى "To cost." ⁴ نَسِيمٌ from تَنَسَّمَ "breeze."

⁵ *Ar-Ruṣāfah*, name of the eastern quarter of Baghdād.

⁶ اِنْتَبَهَ "To awake or rise up from sleep": نَبَهَ "To wake one up."

⁷ The apodosis (فَعَلْ "he would do so") is understood: a common omission in requests.

⁸ ثُمَّ "After some time."

abused me twice as much as she had done the first time. Then she came to a large gate and entered it, and I sat down by the side of it, and my senses left me. Now the sun came out¹ in the streets, and it was a hot day. I had not waited long when two young men on asses approached, and the owner of the house gave them leave to enter. So they went in and I went in with them; and the owner of the house thought I had come with his two friends, while they imagined that the owner of the house had invited me. Food was brought in,² and they ate and washed their hands. Then the master of the house said to them, 'Have you any inclination to hear³ such and such a damsel?' They replied, 'If you will favour us.'⁴ Then this very same maiden came forth, and before her a servant girl carrying a lute of hers, which she placed in her lap.⁵ Then she sang and they were delighted and drank wine and asked her, 'Whose is this,⁶ oh mistress?' She answered, 'Composed by my Lord *Mukhāriq*.' Then she sang another song, and they were delighted, and their delight increased. Then they asked, 'Whose, Lady, is this song?' She replied, 'Composed by my Lord *Mukhāriq*.' Then she sang a third song,⁷ and they rejoiced and drank, while she was glancing furtively⁸

¹ نَزَلَتْ Lit. "descended."

² جَاءَ جِيءَ بِ pass. of جاء.

³ مَلَّ لَكُمْ قِي.

⁴ اِنْ تَفَضَّلْتَ

⁵ حَجَرٌ.

⁶ i.e., Who is the composer? لِمَنْ هَذَا.

⁷ الثَّالِثَ i. e., الصَّوْتُ الثَّالِثُ. Not a third time as مَرَّة is feminine.

⁸ بِالْأَحْظِ, لَاحِظٌ "To cast glances at; also observe attentively."

لَحْظَةً مِيْن "Twinkling of an eye, moment."

at me, full of suspicion.¹ They said, 'O Lady! whose is this?' She said, 'It is by my Lord *Mukhāriq*.' "I could not," he relates, "contain myself longer, and I exclaimed to her, 'O maiden, give me the lute.' So she gave it to me and I sang the song which she had sung first, whereupon they arose and kissed my head.² (A certain man of letters has stated that *Mukhāriq* had a very fine voice.) Then I sang the second and the third, and their senses nearly left them, and they said, 'Oh Lord, who art thou.' I said, 'I am *Mukhāriq*.' They said, 'And what is the cause of thy coming?' I said, 'I am an uninvited guest,³ May God Almighty preserve you'; and I acquainted them with my story. Then said the master of the house to his two friends, 'Ye know that I was offered⁴ thirty thousand dirhams for her, but refused to sell her, desiring more; but I now abate her price by ten thousand dirhams.' The two men exclaimed, 'We will pay the twenty thousand,' and they made me possessor⁵ of the girl. Now *Al-Mu'taṣim* got up and made search for me in *Ar-Ruṣāfah*, but I was not to be found,⁶ so he became angry with me. I remained with them until evening⁷ and then set out with the maiden; and whenever I

¹ شَكَّ فِيَّ She had suspicion as regards me, not sure whether I was the man that followed her in the street or not.

² Probably on the crown of the head.

³ طَقِيلِي See note at the beginning of the story.

⁴ أُعْطِيَ pass. of أَعْطَى "To give."

⁵ مَلَكَ "To put one in possession of something."

⁶ بَصِيبٌ, أَمْسَبَ "To find"; also, "to hit."

⁷ عَصْرٌ "Latter part of the day, towards evening": صَلَاةُ الْعَصْرِ
 "The afternoon prayer: two and a half hours before sunset."

passed a place where she had abused me, I said to her, 'Repeat, O my mistress, thy abuse to me.' But she kept refusing,¹ and I took her by the hand until I came to the gate of the Prince of the Faithful, and we were hand-in-hand. When *Al-Mu'tasim* saw me, he abused me, but I said, 'O Prince of the Faithful, be not hasty against me,' and I told him the story, and he laughed and said to me, 'We will compensate² them on thy behalf, O *Mukhāriq*.' Then he ordered to each of the men thirty thousand dirhams, and to me ten thousand dirhams."

STORY No. 19.

A certain hermit³ had his dwelling on a mountain, and his food used to come to him every day from whence he knew not,⁴ a loaf of bread to stay⁵ his hunger and strengthen his loins.⁶ One day this loaf did not come to him. So he hungered⁷ that night,⁸ and when dawn came, his hunger increased. At the foot of the mountain was a village inhabited by Christians,⁹ so the hermit descended from the

¹ يَأْبَى, أَبَى "To refuse."

يُكَانِى, كَانَا

³ عَبَاد pl. of عَبْد "a devotee, hermit."

⁴ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ

سَدَّ

⁶ صُلْبٌ "The whole of the backbone; also the lower part, the loins."

⁷ يَطْوِي aor. يَطْوِي "To fold up;" [يَطْوِي aor. يَطْوِي "To hunger;"]

⁸ Lit., that night of his = that night.

⁹ نَصْرَانِي pl. of نَصْرَانِي.

mountain to beg¹ food in the village, and halted at a door, and asked the people of the house for food to stay his hunger. So the master of the house gave him three loaves, and he took them, and set out towards the mountain. Now, the owner of the house had a dog, and it followed² the hermit, and began to bark³ at him. So he threw to it a loaf, and went on. The dog ate the loaf and then followed the hermit, and began barking furiously, and almost bit⁴ him. So he threw it another loaf, and it occupied itself with it, while the hermit proceeded until he was half-way up the mountain.⁵ Then the dog ate the other loaf and followed the track⁶ of the hermit, who threw to it the third loaf, which it ate, and then followed him and began barking. So he turned round to it and said, "O shameless creature,⁷ I got three loaves from thy master's house, and I have given⁸ them all to thee; what dost thou want from me?" 'Then God gave the dog speech: ⁹ it said, "There is none shameless save thyself. Know that I have been dwelling at the door of this Christian

لَمَسَ¹ يَلْتَمِسُ¹ aor. "To seek by feeling, or by asking." لَمَسَ¹ to feel with the hand. اِنْبَحَ²

نَبَّاحُ³ "barking." يَنْبَحُ³ "To bark." يَنْبَحُ³

كَلْبٌ مَقْرُورٌ⁴ "A dog given to biting." مَقْرُورٌ⁴; "To bite": also "to slay": مَقْرُورٌ⁴

تَرَسَّطَ الْجَبَلِ⁵

اِتَّقَى⁶ اِتْرَا⁶ "He followed his track": قَعَا⁶ "The back of the neck."

هَدِيمٌ اَلْحَيَاءِ⁷ "Destitute of, wanting in, shame."

اَطْعَمَ⁸ "To give to eat."

اَنْطَقَ⁹ "speech."

for years, and I often pass two or three days without anything, without my mind ever suggesting to me¹ to depart from his door to the door of another; whereas thy provision has been cut off for but a single day, and thou hast had no patience; but hast set out from His door to that of a Christian, to beg for food from him. So tell me, which of us is the more wanting in shame." Then the hermit was ashamed and repented of what he had done, and never so acted again.²

STORY No. 20.

I have been informed by one of my friends, that a Sunni sent some wheat to a *Shi'ī*, and it was old, so he sent it back to him. Then he sent him some new wheat instead of it, but it had earth in it. So after accepting it he wrote to him these verses:—

"Thou sentest as a charitable act³ wheat,⁴ expecting a great recompense from God.

We refused⁵ it when it was old, and accepted it⁶ when it came mingled with earth."

Note.—There is a play upon two words in the last line of the couplet.

The word '*atīq*, 'old,' is a cognomen of Abū Bakr, whom the Shi'ah reject. *Abū Turāb*, "Father of Earth," is an appellation of 'Alī, regarded by the Shi'ah as the first Imām. By the Sunnis, the Shi'ah are called *Rāfiṣīs* or 'Rejecters,' but no play on the word *رَفَضَاءُ* is here intended as the Shi'ah object to the term, and the composer of the couplet was a Shi'ī.

¹ حَدَّثَتْهُ نَفْسُهُ "His mind suggested to him something" (mostly evil).

² عَادَ إِلَى الشَّيْءِ "To return to the same thing; do it again."

³ The Arabic is badly worded, and doubtful.

⁴ وَشَيْءٌ "wheat."

⁵ رَفَضَ

⁶ اِتَّخَذَ

STORY No. 21.

Al-Aṣma'ī has said : " I was once on my way to Mecca for the pilgrimage, travelling with a party of Arabs, when I heard from within a camel-litter near me, a woman saying :—

'I swear by the existence of his need of me and his want of me, that I will surely change¹ his pleasure into pain.

I will prevent his eyelids² from the enjoyment of sleep,³ and I will mix⁴ his tears with his drink.'"⁵

He continues : " I drew near⁶ to the camel-litter and asked, ' Why has he deserved⁷ this punishment ? ' A face appeared⁸ resembling the full moon ; and its owner recited in verse :—

" How often has he divulged⁹ my name after concealing his love for a time, whereas guarding¹⁰ my name would have been more befitting him."¹¹

I swear by his life, that if he had concealed his love, he would have attained his desire¹² without even moving his hand from beneath his garments." "¹³

¹ *فَلَا يَبْدُلُ* aor. *يَبْدُلُ* Read *لَا يَبْدُلُنِي* for *فَلَا يَبْدُلُنِي*.

² *جَفْنٌ* pl. of *جَفْنٌ* " Eyelid ; also, the scabbard of a sword."

³ *النَّوْمِ* " Sleep." *كَرْءٌ* " Hire ; rent."

⁴ *يَمْزِجُ* aor. *يَمْزِجُ* " To mix, especially liquids."

⁵ *شَرَابٌ* " drink." ⁶ *يَدْنُو دَنَا مِنْ* aor. *يَدْنُو* ⁷ *اِسْتَحَقَّ* " To deserve."

⁸ *بَارَزَ بَرَزَ* " To fight a duel." *مُبَارَزَةٌ* and *بِرَازٌ* " duel."

⁹ *يُبْجَحُ* aor. *يُبْجَحُ*

¹⁰ *مِصَانَةٌ* from *يَصُونُ* " To preserve, guard." ¹¹ *أَوَّلَى بِهِ*.

¹² *تَمَنَّى* : *تَمَنَّى* pl. of *مَنْيَةٌ* " A wish, desire " — *بَلَّغَ الْمُنَى* " To wish."

¹³ i.e., without the least trouble, "with his hands in his pockets."

STORY No. 22.

It is told of *Ibn* Abi Maryam** that he said: "I was on a pilgrimage one year,¹ and came to the mosque of the Prophet of God, whom God bless and preserve. And lo! there came a desert Arab² urging on³ his camel till he came to the mosque of the Prophet. Then he tied up his camel and entered, going towards⁴ the tomb. And when he looked at the tomb of the Prophet of God, he exclaimed, 'By my father and my mother will I ransom⁵ thee! Verily God hath sent thee as a bearer of good tidings, and as a warner,⁶ and hath sent down to thee a true book,⁷ in which He taught thee the knowledge of the ancients and moderns, and in which He hath said, 'But if they, after they have sinned to their hurt, come to thee, and ask pardon of God, and the Apostle asks pardon for them, they shall surely find that God is the

¹ فِي بَعْضِ السِّنِّينِ "One year" سَنَوْنِ pl. of سَنَةٍ, is declined as a regular masc. pl.; its oblique form مَسْنِينِ may also be taken as a broken plural and so declined سَنَيْنِ, مَسْنَيْنِ and سَنَيْنِ.

² عَرَبٍ pl. عَرَبِيَّ : "An Arab of the desert" : أَعْرَابٍ pl. أَعْرَابِيَّ "Any Arab."

³ رَكَضَ The use of رَكَضَ in the sense of "to run" is post-classical.

⁴ قَصَدَ = يَرْوَمُ أَمَ aor.

⁵ أَنْتَ مَغْفِي is to be understood after أَنْتَ.

⁶ أَنْذَرَ = نَذِيرٌ from أَنْذَرَ "To warn."

⁷ كِتَابًا مُسْتَقِيمًا 'A book in which there is no error.'

One that forgives¹ and the One that is merciful²; and I know that God will fulfil to thee what he hath promised. And here have I come to thee confessing³ my sins, and asking thy intercession with God the Mighty and Glorious.' Then he left and began to say in verse :—

"O thou the best of those whose bones⁴ lie buried in the ground,⁵ through the scent of these bones the plains and hills⁶ are fragrant.

My soul be a sacrifice to the tomb in which thou liest; in it is purity and nobility and munificence."

STORY No. 23.

It is related of *Al-Aṣmaʿī* that he said, "While I was performing the circuit of the *Ka'bah*, behold I overtook a man with a bundle⁷ on his back, who was also making the circuit. I asked him, 'Art thou going round the *Ka'bah* with a load upon thee?' He answered, 'This is my mother, who carried me in her womb nine months; I would fain repay⁸ to her what is due.' I said to him, 'Shall I shew⁹ thee how thou mayest repay her due?' He said 'How?' I said, 'Thou

¹ تَوَّابٌ The root-meaning of تَابَ is "to return"; hence تَابَ إِلَى اللَّهِ "He returned to God by repentance; he repented." تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ "God returned to him with forgiveness; He forgave him."

² Qur. IV, 67.

³ يَقْرَأُ = أَقْرَأَ. عَظْمٌ "bone," pl. عِظَامٌ and عَظْمٌ. قَاعٌ

⁴ أَكَمَّةٌ "Hill, rising ground," pl. أَكَمٌّ and أَكَامٌ.

⁵ كَارَةٌ "A bundle of clothes."

⁶ أَدَاءٌ : يُؤَدِّي aor. آدى "Payment, discharge."

⁷ دَلِيلٌ : يَدُلُّ aor. دَلَّ "To point out": دَلِيلٌ "Guide," also, "proof."

mayst get her married.' He replied, 'Thou enemy of God, dost thou speak to my face¹ of my mother like this?' The narrator continues, "On this she raised her hand and slapped her son on the back of his head² saying, 'Why dost thou get angry when truth is told thee?' "

STORY No. 24.

It is told of the *Qāzī Yaḥya 'bn* Aktam* that he said, "I once passed the night at the house of *Al-Ma'mūn*, and in the middle³ of the night I thirsted and got up to drink water. *Al-Ma'mūn* saw me and said, 'What is the matter with thee, O *Yaḥya*?' I answered, 'I swear by God,⁴ O Prince of the Faithful, that I am thirsty.' He said, 'Return to thy place.' Then I swear that he got up and went to the place where the water was, and brought me a jug⁵ of water, and stood beside my head, saying, 'Drink, O *Yaḥya*.' I answered, 'O Prince of the Faithful, why not⁶ a man-servant or a maid-servant?' He replied, 'They are asleep.'⁷ I said, 'I would have got up myself to drink.' He answered me, 'It shows a lack of breeding in a man,⁸ to make his guest

¹ يَسْتَقْبِلُ aor. اِسْتَقْبَلَ.

² يَصْفَعُ aor. مَضَع.

³ جَوْثُ: also, "belly, abdomen; hollow."

⁴ "I swear by God," almost an equivalent of the Irish "Faith!"

⁵ كُوزٌ pl. كُوزَات.

⁶ هَلَّا is not interrogative: هَلَّا أَتَيْتَ you should have come (= why didn't you come?) Here, "A servant could have brought this."

⁷ وَصِيفَةٌ In mod. coll. only, of blacks.

⁸ نَائِمٌ pl. نَائِمَات.

⁹ لَوْثٌ "Baceness of origin."

work.' Then he said, 'O Yahya.' I answered, 'Here I am, O Prince of the Faithful.' He said, 'Shall I tell thee a tradition?' I replied, 'Yes, O Prince of the Faithful.' He answered, 'Ar-Rashid told me a tradition he had heard from *Al-Mahdi*, who said that he had heard from *Al-Manṣūr*, who heard from his father, who had heard from *'Ikrimah*, who had heard from *Ibn 'Abbās* (May God be pleased with him), who said that the Prophet of God (whom may God bless and preserve) said, 'The chief of a tribe must be their servant.'"¹

STORY No. 25.

It is said that Ar-Rashid had forsaken² a girl of his. He met her afterwards one night in the palace, tipsy and wearing a cloak of white silk,³ and trailing⁴ her skirts with pride.⁵ So he called her to him. She replied: "O Prince of the Faithful, thou hast deserted me for all this time⁶ and I had no knowledge of thy coming, so give me respite⁷ until I make myself ready⁸ to meet thee, and I will come to thee on

¹ This is the usual form of relating traditions (*إِسْنَادٌ*).

² هَجَرَ "To forsake, abandon, cut off from loving intercourse."

³ رِدَاءٌ خَضِرٌ.

⁴ تَسَحَّبَ قُلُوبًا : يَسْحَبُ "She drags her skirt upon the ground." : سَحَابٌ "clouds."

⁵ نُبَّةٌ "Pride, vanity"; also "Wilderness." ⁶ فِي هَذِهِ الْمَدَّةِ

⁷ Read فَانْظُرْنِي "Grant me time," for فَانْتَظِرْنِي "Wait for me."

⁸ هَيْلَةً : يَتَهَيَّأُ "Form, appearance."

the next morning." So when it was morning, the Khalifah said to the door-keeper, "Suffer not any one to come in unto me"; and he awaited her but she came not. So he arose and went in unto her and asked her for the fulfilment of her promise. She answered, "O Prince of the Faithful! words spoken at night, the day effaces." So he went out and summoned those poets who happened to be at the palace gates, and there entered *Ar-Raqāshī* and *Muṣ'ab* and *Abū Nu'ās*. He said: "Complete, 'Words spoken at night the day effaces.'" So *Ar-Raqāshī* said in verse:—

"Canst thou forget¹ her when thy heart has flown away,² and rest is so forbidden thee that none remains.

And she has left thee a lover infatuated,³ a damsel who neither visits nor will be visited.

When thou visitest her, she promises and then says, 'The words spoken at night, the day will efface!'"

Then *Muṣ'ab* said in verse:—

"Ah! I swear by God wert thou to feel⁴ a love like mine, no house in Baghdād would be spacious⁵ enough for thee.

Does it not suffice thee that my eye is ever in tears⁶ and that there is from remembrance of thee a fire in my vitals?⁷

And where, my lady, is thy promise? She said, 'The words spoken at night are effaced by the day.'"

Then *Abū Nu'ās* said, hitting the mark⁸:—

"I speak of the night she came intoxicated in the palace, yet her dignity graced her intoxication.

¹ سَلَا, *Yasala* "To forget a loved one."

² مُسْتَطَار, *Lit.* "Was made to fly away."

³ مُسْتَهَام, "Lost in love": هَيَام "Passionate love."

⁴ وَجَدَ, *aor.* يَجِدُ "To love passionately"; also "To grieve, sorrow."

⁵ The idea is that through grief every place will be narrow and displeasing.

⁶ عَيْنٌ مَبْرِي: مَبْرِي fem. of مَبْرِي "A weeping eye."

⁷ أَحْشَاءُ pl. of حَشَا "The bowels, or intestines."

⁸ أَجَاد *Lit.* "He said well."

The cloak had fallen from her shoulders¹ from her gambols,² and her mantle was opened.³

I said to her, 'Make me a promise,' and she answered, 'Let your visit be to-morrow.'

But when I came, asking fulfilment,⁴ she said, 'The words spoken at night are effaced by the morning.'

Ar-Rashīd said: "May God destroy thee,⁵ O Abū Nu'ās! It is as though thou wast a third to us"; and he ordered each of them to be given five thousand dirhams and Abū Nu'ās ten thousand dirhams.

STORY No. 26.

It is narrated of *Abu'l-Ḥasan¹-Ibn²-Āzīn Al-Baṣīr*, the grammarian (on whom God have mercy!), that he related: "I was once present with my father in the levee chamber of *Kāfūr Al-Ikshīdī*, which was choke-full⁶ with people, when there came in to him a man who said in his salutation to him, 'May God perpetuate the days of our lord!' and gave a final *kasra* to the word *ayyām*; and some persons of those present noticed⁷ this, one of them being the holder of the reception. The result was, this was spread about.

¹ Dual of مَنَكَبٌ, pl. مَنَاكِبُ.

² تَجَمُّشٌ "Sportiveness, amorous playfulness." نَحَلٌ.

⁴ اِقْتَضَى "To demand payment."

⁵ May God curse thee!" an expression of admiration.

⁶ غَاسٌ "Choking," from فَصَّ "To be choked": فَالِصٌ "diving or diver," from غَاصَ "to dive."

⁷ يَنْظُرُ, aor. يَنْظُرُ.

Then a man from the crowd¹ got up and began to say these verses :—

“Tis no wonder² if he who offered prayers for our Lord, committed a solecism, or if he chokes with his own spittle through bewilderment or dazzlement.³

For a great dignity like his, puts aphony⁴ as an obstacle⁵ between even a learned man and speech.

He⁶ gave *kasra* instead of *Fatḥa* to *Ayyām* by a slip and not from any lack of knowledge.

And I have taken the omen from this for our lord,—and the taking of a good omen is approved in tradition⁷ by the ‘Lord of mankind’—

That his days will be peaceful without trouble and his times clear without muddiness.”

Note.—Examples of two varieties of *tajnīs*. **خَفَضَ** is placing a word in the genitive case and also ‘ease’; and **نَصَبَ** is placing a noun in the accusative case; and **نَصَبٌ** is trouble.

STORY NO. 27.

It is narrated of ‘Abd*’s-Salam¹ ’bn*’l-Ḥusain of Baṣrah, that he related : “Al-Ḥasan* ’bn* Sahl one day was bled,

أَوْسَاطُ النَّاسِ¹

لَا قَرَرَ²

³ Properly **بَهَرَ**; but changed to **بَهَر** by poetical necessity : **بَهَرٌ** “The being overcome, or overpowered”; also “Wonder.”

⁴ **حَصَرَ**, inf. n. of **حَصَرَ** “To be unable to express oneself by reason of shame or confusion or other cause : **فَيْيَ** To be unable to speak, to be at a loss.

⁵ **حَالَ بَيْنَهُمَا** “It intervened as an obstacle between them.”
حَالَ الْبَيْنُ بَيْنَنَا “The river intervened as an obstacle between us.”

⁶ Note this idiom.” **إِنْ** cannot here be translated “if.”

⁷ **مَأْثُورَةٌ** *Lit.* “Has been transmitted by tradition from the Prophet.”

and people competed with each other¹ in sending him gifts,² and there was a man of learning among the secretaries of the departments,³ who was in reduced circumstances (times had gone down with him).⁴ He said to his family, 'Verily, folk are competing in sending this man gifts, and were I to gather all I possess⁵ it would not amount to a thousand dinars. I will, however, do something nice in a small way⁶ in the matter of a gift.' Then he got⁷ some soda plant⁸ and scented salt and enclosed them in a basket⁹ and sealed it. He then wrote to him, 'By God, I swear, O my Lord, were my wealth¹⁰ proportionate to my desire, I would have been one of those vying in shewing duty¹¹ to thee and

¹ تَنَافَسُوا "They vied with one another."

² [تَنَافَسُوا] اِلَيْهِ فِي الْهَدَايَا .

³ كَاتِبٌ pl. كُتَّابٌ "A secretary"; also "A learned man."

⁴ قَعَدَ بِهِ الزَّمَانُ "Time crippled him": مَقْعَدٌ "Cripple."

⁵ مَا تَحْتَوِي عَلَيْهِ يَدَيَّ *Lit.* "What my hand grasps or contains."

⁶ تَلَطَّفَ Note the exact meaning of this word.

⁷ قَعَدَ اِلَيْهِ *Lit.* "He betook himself to."

⁸ اُشْنَانٌ "Potash used for washing the hands."

⁹ جُرَّةٌ "A small round basket for perfumes."

¹⁰ جَدَّةٌ from وَجَدَ, "Wealth," also, "Power."

¹¹ بِرٌّ "Showing kindness; paying regard": بِرٌّ بِكَذَا "He showed kindness to him by such a thing"; and also "He presented him with such a thing." بِرٌّ also means, "A thing sent to another in token of courtesy or honour."

hastening to show their affection. But [want of] means has crippled my action¹ so I have failed to equal the men of wealth; yet I feared lest the book of loyalty should be closed and there be no mention of me in it. So I have sent² thee—may God Almighty exalt thee!—something trivial, and have put up with the pain that my inability and defectiveness³ causes me.’ Thus to me applies⁴ these words of God the Mighty the Glorious, ‘In the case of the weak and the sick and those who find not wherewith to spend [for the holy war], it shall be no crime⁵ provided they are faithful towards God and His Apostle. There is no way to lay blame on the righteous, and God is forgiving and merciful’;⁶ and underneath it he wrote in verse:—

“All vied in giving thee gifts on the morning the artery⁷ was cut.

But I saw nothing of greater profit than a prayer or more suitable⁸ as a return to a friend.

So I sent to thee a prayer, and said, ‘May my Lord preserve⁹ thee from the ills and dangers of the veins!’”

¹ *Lit.* “Crippled my ^{نَفْسِي} *نَفْسِي*.”: *هَيْمَة* is “soul” or that which incites a man to noble action.

² ^{رَجَعْتُ} *رَجَعْتُ* “To send”; ^{رَجَعْتُ} *رَجَعْتُ* “To go.”

³ ^{نَقَصِيرٌ} *نَقَصِيرٌ* “Falling short of what is due to a person.”

⁴ ^{وَكَانَ الْمَعْبَرُ عِنْدِي} *وَكَانَ الْمَعْبَرُ عِنْدِي* “What speaks for me is...”

⁵ ^{خَرَجٌ} *خَرَجٌ* “An act of disobedience deserving punishment.”

⁶ ^{لَا يَأْسُ = لَا حَرَجٌ} *لَا يَأْسُ = لَا حَرَجٌ* “There is no harm in thy doing this.”

⁷ This text has reference to the Jihād.

⁸ The *basilic* vein, the largest vein in the arm.

⁹ ^{أَبْلَغُ الْبَلْغِ} *أَبْلَغُ الْبَلْغِ* “There is nothing by which a friend can *better* be rewarded.”

⁹ ^{يَقِي} *يَقِي* “Keep one safe from” (with double acc.).

"Then Al-Ḥasan^a 'bn^a Sahl wrote to him, 'I swear by God, my friend, no gift hath reached me better than thine, nor any rarity¹ prettier than thine. So I have sent thee a thousand dinars to expend upon thy necessities.' Then he took the letter and went in with it before *Al-Mutawakkil* and when he had read it to him, the latter said, 'Thou bastard!² how much didst thou carry to this man?' He said, 'A thousand dinars.' He replied, 'Then give him from my treasury a hundred thousand dirhams.' "

STORY No. 28.

It is told of Al-Aṣma'ī (upon whom may God have mercy!) that he related: "I fled once from Baṣrah, from a Governor there, and betook myself to the desert, where I stayed such time as God pleased, and there came³ a desert Arab from Baṣrah, whom I questioned concerning its tidings. He told me that the Governor was dead. I said, 'May God give thee, too, tidings of good! it was from him that I fled.'"

He answered, 'May thou be spared anxieties,'⁴ and he began to recite in verse:—

^a Possess thy soul in patience in every anxiety; verily patience is the only expedient for him who strives to free himself from anxiety.⁵

¹ نِعْمَةٌ "A present; or a rare and pleasing present."

² لَا أُمَّ لَكَ "Thou art one who has been picked up as a foundling, having no known mother: or mayest thou have no mother!" Used as an imprecation without the desire of its being fulfilled upon the person addressed, being said in vehemence of love, like

فَاتِلَكَ اللَّهُ and تَكَلَّتْ أُمُّكَ, لَا أَبَا لَكَ. ³ قَدِمَ "To come, arrive."

⁴ كَفَيْتَ الْمُهْمَ "Thou hast been spared a great trouble."

⁵ إِحْتَالَ "To devise means."

Distress not thyself about events, for verily their painfulness ¹ may come to an end without your planning.

Sometimes the mind is alarmed² at an event, from which there is release³ as easy as the loosing of a camel's tether.' "

assemble round one possessed of madness ?¹ Disperse from round me.'² So the bystanders said to each other, 'Let him alone, for his evil spirit is talking in the language of India.'"

Note.—The words "*taka^{ka}tum*" and "*ifranqi^u*" are very rare and barbarous, hence the bystanders thought he spoke in a foreign tongue.

STORY No. 30.

It is said that a man was once driven by God Almighty to the 'Island of Women,' and they resolved to kill him. But one of them had compassion on him and mounted him on³ a log of wood and set him adrift⁴ in the sea. Then the waves sported with him and cast him upon some part of China, and he acquainted the King of that island, with what he had seen of the women and the abundance of gold they possessed. So the king despatched a ship and men with him, and they remained at sea a long time, voyaging round in search of that island, but found no trace of it⁵—and God knows best !⁶

¹ *جَنَّةٌ* here = *جُنُونٌ* "Possession ; insanity, madness"—originally signifying 'a state of possession by a *jinnī*.'

² *اِنزِعُوا عَنِّي* "Withdraw ye, or disperse yourselves from me and go away."

³ *حَمَلَ عَلَيَّ*.

⁴ *سَبَّ*.

⁵ *وَقَفَ عَلَيَّ: لَمْ يَقِفُوا لَهَا عَلَى اَثَرٍ* "To know, light upon, discover."

⁶ *i.e.*, I can't vouch for the truth of this: the usual formula when narrating a story of which the truth is doubtful.

STORY No. 31.

It is told of *Ibn* 'l-Kharif* that he related : “ My father said to me, I once gave to *Aḥmad* 'bn* 's-Sabb*, the broker, a robe, and said, ‘Sell it for me, pointing out to whomsoever buys it, this defect which is in it’; and I showed him a rent¹ in the robe. So he went and returned towards evening and gave me the price of it, saying, ‘I sold it to a Persian, a stranger,² for these dinars.’ I asked him, ‘Didst thou show him the defect and acquaint him with it?’ He replied : ‘No; I swear by God that I forgot to do so.’ I said, ‘May God not reward thee with good. Come³ with me to him’; and I went with him and we repaired to his house,⁴ but could not find him. So we made enquiries about him and were told that he had set out to Makkah along with the pilgrim caravan.⁵ So I got from the broker the description⁶ of the man and hired⁷ a beast of burden and overtook the caravan. Then I asked about the man and was directed to him, and I said to him, ‘Such and such a robe which thou didst buy yesterday from such and such a person for such and such a sum, has a defect in it, so bring it and take back thy gold.’⁸

¹ خَرَقٌ “A hole, rent.”

² أَعْجَمِي “A Persian, or non-Arab”: فَرِيبٌ “A stranger in that part of the country.”

³ مَضَى imp. of مَضَى “To go.” قَهْدَنَا مَكَانَهُ

⁵ حَاجٌّ “A pilgrim,” but also used here as a pl.; syn. with حُجَّاجٌ.

⁶ مِفْقَةٌ, from وَصَفَ “To describe.” ⁷ كَرَأَ : اِكْتَرَى “Hire, wages.”

⁸ هَاتِ “Give me” = اَعْطِنِي - ذَمَبٌ “gold = gold pieces.”

Then he arose and produced the garment and searched for the rent¹ until he found it, and when he saw it, he said, 'Oh old man, produce my money that I may see it.' Now I had never examined² nor tested³ the money when I received it, so I took it out, and when he saw it, he said, 'This is my gold; examine it, Oh Shaikh.' The narrator adds: "I looked at it and lo! it was counterfeit⁴ and worth nothing.⁵ So he took it, and throwing it away said to me, 'I buy from thee this garment with its defect for the same amount of gold,' and he paid me good money to the value of the counterfeit money and I returned with it."

STORY No. 32.

A story is told by *Manṣūr*, the secretary of *Ar-Raṣhīd*, as follows: "I went on a pilgrimage with *Yakya 'bn' Khālīd Al-Barmakī*, and when we were at Medina⁶ news was brought to us⁷ that a man named *Ma'bad*, a slave dealer,

¹ طَافَ عَلَى also, "To look for."

² مَيَّرَ originally "To separate," hence, "To discriminate, distinguish": مِّنَ التَّمْيِيزِ "The age of discrimination."

³ اِنْتَقَدَ and نَقَدَ "To examine money, to separate the good from the bad": اِنْتِقَادٌ "Criticism."

⁴ زَيْفٌ = مَغْشُوشٌ ⁵ لَا يَسَاوِي شَيْئًا "Not worth anything."

⁶ وَأَنَا مَوْجُودُونَ بِالْمَدِينَةِ = وَأَنَا بِالْمَدِينَةِ "While we were at Medina."

⁷ رُفِعَ إِلَيْنَا pass.

had with him a number of singing girls.¹ So I said to *Yahya*, 'What sayest thou² to our going there?' He replied, 'Do so.' So we went to him, and he showed us³ upwards of⁴ sixty singing girls, but not one of them suited us,⁵ and at the end of them there passed by a slave-boy, and I do not imagine that there exists his equal on earth in beauty and figure. So I asked, 'Is this one for sale?' He answered, 'Yes, he can write, and keep accounts, and sing and play.'

"Then I said, 'Display him,'⁶ and I looked at his symmetrical⁷ form, and clean smooth⁸ face, and goodly⁹ stature, and asked, 'What is his price?' He replied, 'He cost me¹⁰ three hundred dinars, and he is worth a thousand.' So I ordered the boy to sing¹¹ and he sang:—

¹ قَيْنَةٌ pl. of قَيْنٌ.

² مَا لَكَ رَغْبَةً = مَا لَكَ "Have you a wish to? would you like to?"

³ عَلَيْنَا should be عَلَيْنَا.

⁴ نَيْفٌ (lit. excess, surplus), an undefined number used with the tens: نَيْفٌ وَعِشْرُونَ "Twenty and odd" (from 21 to 29).

⁵ يَصْلَحُ مَلَمٌ "To be fit, suitable."

⁶ يَعْزِضُ, عَرَضٌ "To show, display (for sale)."

⁷ سَوِيٌّ. ⁸ نَقِيٌّ. ⁹ شَهِيٌّ. ¹⁰ عَلَيَّ.

¹¹ Elliptical فَامَرْتُ الْغُلَامَ أَنْ يَغَنِيَ فَغَنَى.

⁴ You have been able to silence your tongue but who will guarantee to you¹ that your eye will keep (your love) secret, your eye, the tears of which are ever flowing?²

I bear mountains of love on my back, and yet I am too weak and feeble³ to support the weight of my shirt.⁴ ”

“Then I said to my slave, ‘Pay him (the dealer) four hundred dinars, and clothes⁴ worth a hundred dinars, and perfumes, and give the boy a hundred as a gift to buy what he wants,⁴ and cause his place in the (caravan-party) to be close to mine,⁵ so that I may hear his voice and behold his person,’ and he did so. And when the day of our departure came, I did not hear him utter a word until we came in sight of⁶ the place we were to halt in, when he heaved a sigh⁷ which went to my heart,⁸ and then hummed⁹ these verses:—

‘I never even dreamt that Ma’bad would sell me for money even though his hand¹⁰ became empty.¹¹

¹ مَنْ لِي بِكَذَا (supply ضامن) “Who will be responsible to me for such a thing?”

² ذَرَفَتْ عَيْنُهُ (aor. يَدْرِفُ) “The tears flowed : ذَرَفَتْ عَيْنُهُ. “His eye shed tears” : tr. and intr.

³ عَجَزَ عَنْهُ “He lacked strength to do it; was too weak to do it.”
Syn. ضَعُفَ عَنْهُ. ⁴ كِسْوَةً and كِسْوَةً “clothing.”

⁵ يُقَلِّعُ بِهَا شَأْنَهُ “to better his condition.”

⁶ مَرْكَبٌ “Place of riding in the caravan procession.”

⁷ أَشْرَفَ عَلَى. ⁸ فَنَفَسَ “To sigh,” also “To breathe.”

⁹ نَزَعْتُ نَزْعًا “To draw out,” lit.: “drew out my liver!” ⁹ نَزَعْتُ.

¹⁰ إِبْرَامِلُ “Tips of the fingers”: synecdoche.

¹¹ مَفْرُجٌ “empty” — رَجُلٌ مَفْرُجُ الْيَدَيْنِ “A mau empty-handed,”

I am their brother and their friend and one trusted with their secrets,
one who grew up ¹ among them and lived with them long.

There is a yearning for them in my heart though only an hour has passed
since I left them, ² so how will it be when the camels ³ have borne
us hence a month's journey? "

He continued, "I could not restrain myself ⁴ from calling him, and saying to him, 'Dost thou wish me to send thee back to thy master?' He replied, 'Wilt thou really do so?' I said, 'Yes.' He said, 'I swear to thee by God, my master, I do wish it.' I said, 'Go; thou art free. Here slave, send him back and give him a hundred dinars and make him over to some one ⁵ who will conduct him thither.' Then *Yahya* said to me, 'What! is a slave like this set free?' I answered, 'Woe to thee, ⁶ is such an one as this kept in bondage?' Then *Yahya* repeated a verse: —

'Generosity is found only in its mines ⁷ but meanness ⁸ is found wherever you look for it.'

¹ نَشَأَ for نَشَأُ, by poetical necessity.

² لَمْ يَمُضْ لِي Lit. "There has not passed to me."

³ مَطِيَّةٌ and مَطَايَا pls. of مَطِيَّةٌ "Beast of burden; animal for

riding": مَطَأٌ "back": اِمْتَنَطَى "To mount, ride."

⁴ لَمْ اَتَمَالِكْ اَنْ so also لَمْ اَمْلِكْ نَفْسِي اَنْ

⁵ وَكَلَّ "To appoint a guardian over, or entrust one with the care of anything (with acc. of pers. and ب of thing).

⁶ وَهَلَكَ in anger; وَبِحَبْك in a friendly way.

⁷ As gold is only found in its mine.

⁸ شَرٌّ "evil, badness," here = contrary of جَوْد

STORY No. 33.

This story is told by 'Aliyy* 'bn* 'l Muwaffaq; he relates: "I once heard the Deaf¹ Ḥātim say, 'We encountered the Turks and there was a mounted skirmish² between us, and a Turk shot³ me and upset⁴ me from my horse. Then he got down from his beast, and sat upon my chest, and seized this flowing⁵ beard of mine, and drew out a knife from his shoe⁶ wherewith to slay me. Yet, I swear by my Lord, my heart was neither with him, nor with his knife, but with my Lord, awaiting the decree that⁷ would descend from Him. Then I said, 'O my Lord, thou hast decreed that this man should slay me, so upon my head and eyes be it; I belong to thee alone⁸ and am thy property!' So while I was addressing my Lord, and the Turk was sitting upon my chest seizing my beard to slay me, lo! one of the Muslims shot him with an arrow, hitting [not missing]¹⁰ his throat, and he fell off me,

¹ وَهُوَ الْأَصَمُّ "I mean that Ḥātim who is called الْأَصَمُّ "the Deaf,"—there being more than one Ḥātim.

² جَوْلَةً = جَوْلَةً "جَالَ فِي الْعَرَبِ" "He wheeled round, or about, in battle."

³ يَرْمِي, رَمَى "To shoot."

يَقْلِبُ, أَقْلَبَ.

⁵ وَافِرَةً "Large."

⁶ خُفٍّ "Shoe, boot," pl. أَخْفَافٌ and خَفَافٌ.

⁷ قَضَاءٌ "Fate." يَقْضِي, قَضَى "To decree."

⁸ إِنَّمَا is restrictive = only.

⁹ مُلْكٌ "property generally"; مِلْكٌ is generally used for landed property.

¹⁰ لَمْ يَخْطَأْ "To miss the mark"; أَصَابَ "To hit the mark."

and I got up to him and, seizing the knife from his hand, killed him. So behold in the case of one whose heart is with his Lord, how he is saved ¹ from dangers by His kindness and favour."

STORY No. 34.

It is told of a certain man of learning that he said ²: "I saw a man once of the tribe of *'Uqail* who had marks on his back like the cuts made by a cupper,³ and I questioned him as to the cause of this. He replied, 'I was in love with a cousin of mine and asked her in marriage, and they said to me, we will not give her to thee in marriage [marry thee] unless thou makest *Ash-Shabakah* the gift for the bride.'⁴ Now *Ash-Shabakah* was a swift⁵ mare belonging to one of the tribe of *Bakr* 'bn' *Kilāb*. So I married her on this condition, and went out laying stratagems by which I might steal⁶ the mare from her owner, so that I might be

¹ يَنْجُو, نَجَى "To escape; be delivered, saved": "To deliver, save."

² Read شَرَطٌ for شُرَطٌ: شُرَطٌ means "scarification," and شَرَطٌ "a scarification"; but the latter has شَرَطَات in the pl. and not شُرَطٌ.

³ يَهْوِي, هَوَى "To fall": يَهْوِي, هَوَى "To love."

⁴ مَدَاقٌ and مَدَاقٌ "A dowry; nuptial gift; or gift that is given either to, or for, a bride."

⁵ سَبَقٌ fem. سَابِقَةٌ applied to a horse that outstrips, from سَبَقٌ "To outstrip, come in first." The pl. of سَابِقٌ is سَبَقٌ, and of سَابِقَةٌ, سَرَابِقٌ.

⁶ سَلَّ, سَلَّ "To steal covertly or secretly"; سَنَّ "A cunning

able to pay the gift for my cousin.¹ So I came to the encampment² in which the mare was, in the guise of a butcher,³ and continued mixing with them⁴ until I became acquainted with the spot in the man's tent⁵ where the mare remained at night,⁶ and I saw that she had a filly.⁷ Then I schemed until I got into the tent and hid myself underneath some dyed wool⁸ which they had teased for spinning, and when night drew on, the master of the house came home. Now his wife had prepared⁹ supper for him, so he came up and they both began to eat. It was a very dark night¹⁰ and they had no lamp, so, as I was hungry, I put out my hand and reached forward to¹¹ the wooden dish,

يَسْلُ الْكُذْلَ مِنَ الْعَيْنِ "Au ordinary thief." سَارِقٌ "dexterous thief."

a common saying for a skilled thief.

¹ مَهْرٌ = مَدَاقٌ either "dowry," or "gift to father for a bride."

² حَيٍّ either "a tribe" or "an encampment."

³ بِصُورَةِ جَزَارٍ. ⁴ Them, i.e., أَهْلَ الْحَيِّ.

⁵ مَبِيتٌ noun of place from بَاتَ, يَبِيتُ "To pass the night."

⁶ خَبَاءٌ pl. اُخْبِيَّةٌ "a woollen tent."

⁷ مَهْرٌ "a foal"; مَهْرَةٌ "a filly."

⁸ عَمَّنْ "Coloured wool."

⁹ أَصْلَحَ "To prepare well for use."

¹⁰ اسْتَحْكَمَتِ الظُّلُمَةُ, Lit. "The darkness had become firm or established."

¹¹ أَمَرَى إِلَى "To stretch out towards."

and ate along with them.¹ So the man became conscious of my hand and felt it strange,² so he seized hold of it. I thereupon seized the woman's hand with my other hand, and she said to him, 'What art thou doing with my hand?'³ So he imagined that he had seized hold of his wife's hand, and let go of my hand. So I let go the woman's hand, and we continued eating. Afterwards the woman felt that my hand was strange, so she seized hold of it; then I grasped the man's hand, and he said to her, 'What is the matter with thee?' And she relinquished my hand, and I relinquished his. When the eating was over,⁴ the man stretched himself on his back⁵ and slept. So when he was sound asleep⁶ I remained watching them, and the mare was shackled by the side of the tent and her filly in the tent untethered, and the key of the mare's fetters⁷ underneath the woman's head. Then there came a black slave belonging to the man, and he threw⁸ a pebble, whereupon the woman awoke and rose to meet him, leaving the key in her place. So she came out of the tent and went to the back of it, and I crept forward and

¹ مَعَهُمَا should be مَعِي.

² أَنْكَرَ "To fail to recognise;" also "to deny": تَنَكَّرَ to disguise oneself.

³ مَا لَكَ وَيدِي. ⁴ اِنْقَضَى الطَّعَامُ.

⁵ اِسْتَلْقَى "To lie or throw oneself on one's back."

⁶ اِسْتَقْبَلَ should be اِسْتَقْبَلَ نَوْمًا — اِسْتَقْبَلَ "He was overcome, and rendered heavy, by sleep."

⁷ Iron fetters like handcuffs.

⁸ يَنِيذُ, نَبَذَ to throw by hand.

took the key and opened the lock. Now I had with me a bridle made of hair, so I put it into the mare's mouth¹ and mounting her, went out on her from the tent. So the woman returning entered the tent and raised an outcry, and the encampment was alarmed² and detected me.³ They rode out in pursuit of me, and I urged⁴ on the mare with a crowd of them behind me, and when morning came I saw only one solitary horseman armed with a spear. He overtook me just as the sun had risen, and began to strike at me with the spear, but no more resulted than the marks thou now seest on my back; for his horse could not get near enough to me for him to have full mastery over me,⁵ nor could my horse bear me far enough away from him for the spear not to touch me.⁶ So we continued until we came to a stream and I shouted to my mare and made her to jump, and the horseman shouted to his mare but she refused to jump. So when I saw that she could not cross the stream, I dismounted to rest myself and my mare,⁷ and the man called out to me. I said, 'What

“أَرْجَرُ الصَّبِيَّ دَوَاءً” “To put in the mouth of another” “أَرْجَرُ” He put, or poured, medicine in the child's mouth.”

² ذُفِرَ pass. “To be alarmed, frightened.” ذَفَرَ “To frighten.”

ذُفِرَ “fear, fright.”

³ أَحْصَوْنِي “They saw, or perceived me; they discovered that I was there.”

⁴ كَدَّ “To urge or press hard;” also “To exert oneself.”

⁵ تَمَكَّنَ مِنْ “To have in one's power.”

⁶ يَمَسُّ، يَمَسُّ “To touch, come in contact with.”

⁷ اسْتَرَأَحَ “To take rest.”—أَرَأَحَ “To give rest to.”

hast thou to say?' He said, 'Friend,¹ I am the owner of the mare thou art riding, and this is her filly, and since thou hast taken her, take care of her. For verily, I swear by God, I have never sought for anything on her, but obtained it, and she was like a net in catching a thing.'² I answered him, 'Since thou hast been straight with me,³ by God, I will surely be straight with thee, and I am no liar. Such and such things⁴ happened to me yesterday.' And I told him all until I related the story of his wife and the slave and my stratagem to get the horse. Then he bent down his head for a time and then looked up and said, 'May God give thee no good reward, unwelcome night visitor⁵ that thou hast been.'"

STORY NO. 35.

It is said that *Qaiṣar* (Cæsar), the King of *Shām* and *Rūm*,⁶ sent a messenger to *Kisrā Anūshirwān*, the King of *Fāris*⁷ (Persia), him of the Palace.⁸ So when he arrived and saw the greatness of the palace and the majesty of *Kisrā* as he sat upon his throne, while the kings were in attendance,

¹ يَا هَذَا "Friend!" = يَا هَذَا الرَّجُلُ O thou! O man!

² فِي التَّعْلُقِ بِهَا. The *ها* in *بِهَا* refers to the net: *lit.*, in this respect that things are caught in it.

³ بِنَصَحٍ, نَصَحَ "To act towards one with honesty"; also, "To give sincere advice."

⁴ كَيْتٌ وَكَيْتٌ. ⁵ طَوَارِقُ, طَارِقَةٌ.

⁶ Syria and Greece (or the Eastern Empire).

⁷ *Fāris* Ar. for *Fārs*.

⁸ The palace of which the arch still remains (Ctesiphon's arch).

he looked attentively at ¹ the palace and beheld a crookedness ² on one side of it. Then he questioned the interpreter about this, and was told that this was the house of an old woman who did not wish ³ to sell it at the time of the building of the palace, and the king did not approve of ⁴ coercing her to sell it, ⁵ and allowed her house to remain by the side of his palace. "This," said the interpreter, "is what thou didst see and ask about." Then said the man of *Rām*, "I swear by my faith, ⁶ this crookedness is more admirable than straightness; ⁷ and by my faith I swear that this that the king of the age hath done has never been chronicled ⁸ of any king in the past, nor will it ever be chronicled of any in the future." His speech pleased Kisrā, so he gave bounty to him and sent him back delighted. ⁹

† مَبْزُ To examine a thing to see whether it is good or bad."

² اِمْرَجَ inf. n. of اِمْرَجَ "To be crooked": [اِمْعَلْ, for defects and colours].

³ يَكْرَهُ "To dislike, be averse to": اِكْرَهُ To compel one to do a thing against his will (with acc. of person and فَعْلَى of thing)."

⁴ لَمْ يَرَّ "Did not think it right."

⁵ يَبِيعُ, يَبِيعُ "To sell"; يَبْتَاعُ, يَبْتَاعُ "To buy."

⁶ وَحَقِّي دِينِهِ "By his (i.e. my) faith." A *Muslim* indirect narration for, "I divorced my wife," would say, "He divorced his wife."

⁷ اِسْتَقَامَ "To be, or become, straight, inf. n. اِسْتَقَامَ."

⁸ يَرْوِي "To chronicle; also to date": تَارِيخُ "History."

⁹ مَرْوَرٌ = مَرْوَرٌ.

STORY No. 36.

It is told of *Ya'qūb** 'bn* *Ishāq** s-*Sarrāj* that he related :
 "One of the people of *Rāmiyyah*¹ said to me : ' I was sailing
 upon the sea of the *Zanj*² and the wind cast me upon the
 island of the one-eyed men,³ and I came to a town the people
 of which were but one cubit in stature, and the majority of
 them were one-eyed. So a number of them collected round
 me, and drove me to their king, who ordered me to be im-
 prisoned in a cage. I broke the cage, but they feeling se-
 cure, ceased confining me.⁴ Now one day I saw that they
 had prepared themselves⁵ for fighting, so I asked them
 about this, and they replied, ' We have an enemy who
 comes every year and attacks us, and this is the season.'⁶ I
 had not waited long after this, when a flock⁷ of cranes de-
 scended upon us, and it was to their pecking⁸ that the one-
 eyedness of this people was due. So the cranes attacked
 them, screaming at them ; and when I saw this I girded⁹ my
 waist and took a stick and attacked them vigorously¹⁰ utter-
 ing weird¹¹ cries, and I brought down a large number of

¹ Rome.

² الزنج "The Ethiopians."

³ عور pl. of أعور and عوراء "One-eyed" : عور "One-eyedness."

⁴ إحتَجَرَ عَلَى "To confine."

⁵ استعدَّ، يستعدُّ—inf. n. استعداد. ⁶ أوان "time, season" ; Pl. أوانة.

⁷ عصابة : also "A company of men."

⁸ ينقر، نقْر "To peck" : منقار "Beak."

⁹ شدَّ عَلَى "To bind tightly" : شدَّ عَلَى "To attack."

¹⁰ The two synonymous verbs, شدَّ and حملَّ, are emphatic.

¹¹ منكر "Unknown" ; hence "Strange, extraordinary."

them. So they cried out and flew away in fear of me;¹ and when the people of the island saw this, they treated me with honour and respect, and bestowed wealth upon me,² and asked me to stay with them. I however declined, and they put me in a ship and equipped me.’”

And Aristotle has mentioned that the cranes migrate³ from the country of Khurāsān to Egypt where is the stream⁴ of the Nile, and that they fight with these one-eyed men on their way, and that they are a tribe only a cubit in height. But God alone knows the truth.

STORY No. 37.

It is narrated of one of the learned men of Shām (Syria), that he said: “I met a man who had a great many scratches⁵ on his face, and when I questioned him about them, he said to me, ‘I was once with a party on the sea of the Zanj, when the wind drove us upon the island of Saksār, and we could not⁶ leave it owing to the violence of the wind. Then men came up to us, whose faces were the faces of dogs, and their bodies the bodies of men; and one of them

¹ هَارِبِينَ مِنِّي, *Lit.* “Fleeing, running away, from me.”

² أَفَادُونِي مَالًا. ³ يَنْتَقِلُ, *إِنْتَقَلَ* “To remove from a place”: intrans.

⁴ مَسِيلٌ, *سَالٌ* “A channel in which water flows,” from *سَالَ*, *سِيلٌ* “To flow.”

⁵ خُمُوشٌ pl. of خُمُوشٌ.

⁶ لَمْ نَسْتَطِعْ, *بَسْتَطِيعُ*, *إِسْتَطَاعَ* “To be able, have power, be capable of.”

hastened forward to¹ us with a stick he had ; and a number of them took stand behind us. Thus they drove us to their dwelling-place, and we beheld in it skulls,² and brain-pans,³ and legs,⁴ and fore-arms,⁵ and ribs,⁶ in great number ; and they brought us into a house in which was an infirm man, and began bringing us much food, and abundant⁷ victuals and nice fruits. Thereupon this man said to us, 'They are only feeding⁸ you in order that you may fatten, and every one that becomes fat they will eat.' " The narrator continued, "I began to eat very little,⁹ but not so my companions,¹⁰ and every one that grew fat they took away and ate, until only I and that infirm man were left. One day the man said to me, 'These people have in this season a festival,¹¹ on account of which they go out and remain absent for three days, celebrating it¹² ; so if thou art able to escape with thy

¹ سَبَقَ إِلَى "To go quickly to."

² جُمُوعَةٌ pl. of جَمَاعَةٌ.

³ قُحُوفٌ pl. of قُحْفٌ.

⁴ سُرُجٌ pl. of سَرَجٌ.

⁵ ذِرَاعٌ pl. of ذِرَاعٌ.

⁶ أَضْلَاعٌ pl. of ضِلْعٌ.

⁷ فَزِيرٌ adj. "Abundant."

⁸ أَطْعَمَ , يُطْعِمُ "To feed" : طَعَامٌ "food."

⁹ قَلَّلَ "To reduce, make little."

¹⁰ دُونَ أَحْبَابِي The meaning of دُونَ here is "exclusively of ; not."

¹¹ حَضَرَهُمْ عِيدٌ "Lit. A festival has presented itself to them ; i.e., the time has arrived for a festival of theirs."

¹² قِيْدٌ ; The pronoun refers to عِيدٌ. "To be in a festival " means to celebrate it.

life,¹ do so ; but as for me I cannot move,² as thou seest, and cannot run away ;³ so look to thyself.' I replied, ' May God reward thee with Paradise,' and went out and began travelling by night and concealing myself by⁴ day. So when they returned from their festival, they missed⁵ me, and came in pursuit of me, until they despaired and turned back. Then when I had escaped from them, I went⁶ on travelling night and day in the island, and came to some trees, which had fruit⁷ on them, and underneath were men of beautiful shape, except that their legs⁸ had in them no bones. So I sat down, but could not understand their speech, nor could they understand mine ; and before I was aware of it⁹ one of them mounted on my neck and put his legs round me,¹⁰ and forced

1 نَجَا بِنَفْسِهِ aor. يَنْجُو "Deliverance, safety."

2 لَا أَسْتَطِيعُ الْحَرَكَةَ.

3 هَرَبْتُ هَرَبًا "To run away" ; inf. n. هَرَبٌ not هَرَبٌ.

4 اخْفَى "To be hidden ;" اخْفَى "To hide ;" اخْتَفَى "To hide oneself."

5 فَقَدْتُ فَقْدًا "To miss ;" also, "To lose."

6 اَيْسَرْتُ مِنْهُمْ should be either اَيْسَرْتُ مِنْهُمْ, "I made them despair of finding me," or اَيْسَرْتُ مِنْهُمْ, "I became free from fear of them."

7 فَاكِهَةٌ pl. of فَاكِهَةٌ "To take dessert."

8 سُرُجٌ pl. of سُرُجٌ ; also, سُرُجٌ.

9 لَمْ أَشْعُرْ إِلَّا وَ... "All of a sudden."

10 طَوَّقَ "To put round like a neck-ring" : طَوَّقَ "A collar."

me to rise. I got up with him and began struggling¹ to free myself from him, and to cast him down from me ; but I could not, and he began scratching my face with his sharp pointed² nails. So I began to go round the trees with him, while he ate their fruit and gave his companions to eat, while they jeered at me. And while I was going round with him among the trees, a thorn from a tree entered his eye, and his feet relaxed their hold on me, and I threw him down from my neck and went my way. So God delivered me by His grace ; and these scratches I received from him—may God never have mercy upon his bones ! ”

STORY No. 38.

It is said that a devout³ young man of the Children of Israel used to worship in his cell, and he was one of the most comely of mankind in countenance. Now he used to make baskets⁴ and sell them in the market-place of Jerusalem. His name was John, and his clothing was of sackcloth,⁵ and his complexion was like the colour of a ruby in clearness,

¹ يُعَالِجُ , عَالَجَ “To struggle with ; ” also “To treat medically.”

عَالَجَ “Treatment.”

² حَدَدَ and حَدَدَ : مُحَدَدٌ “To sharpen a knife, sword, or anything blunt.”

³ *Lit.* One of the devotees of the Children of Israel. عَبَادٌ pl. of عَابِدٌ.

⁴ قَفَافٌ pl. of قَفَاةٌ “A basket (especially of palm leaves).”

⁵ مَسْحُوحٌ pl. of مَسْحُوحٌ “A garment of coarse hair-cloth, worn by monks.”

owing to the excess of his devotion, and a light shone¹ from between his eyes.² Now, one day he passed by the door of a *pardah* lady,³ and one of her handmaidens saw him and said, "O my mistress, there hath just passed by our door a youth, who is one of the most comely of men in face; he is like a string of precious stones." She answered her, "Woe unto thee, bring him in to the house that we may view him and purchase something from him." Now as often as he passed through a door, they⁴ closed it behind him, till he came to the sitting room; and lo! he beheld in it a maiden, one of the most beautiful of creatures, seated upon a couch studded with jewels, and on her a robe as transparent as flowing [poured] water.⁵ Then she remained with her eyes fixed⁶ gazing at him, and unable to desist⁷ from looking at him. He said to her, "Oh handmaid of God,⁸ either thou must buy from me or I must go my way." Then she began to be free and easy with him in her talk⁹; but he continued to say, "Either thou must buy from me or I will go my way." She answered, "I have but brought thee into my

¹ يَسْطَعُ, سَطَعَ "To shine."

² Between his eyes, i.e., from his forehead."

³ مُخَدَّرَةٌ "A matron, a virtuous lady (always veiled when going out);" "A young girl kept behind the curtain."

⁴ Read جَعَلُوا for جَعَلَ.

⁵ يَسْكُبُ, سَكَبَ : مَاءٌ مَسْكُوبٌ = "To pour out (water)."

⁶ شَاخِصَةً. ⁷ مَنَعَ نَفْسَهَا "To restrain herself."

⁸ أَمَةٌ The pl. of أَمَةٌ "A slave-girl, handmaid" is أَمَاءٌ.

⁹ يَبَاسِطُ, بِاسَطَ (with acc.) to speak familiarly with.

house that I may deliver myself to thee.”¹ He said, “Woe unto thee! I have read the Gospel² the book of God, and it befits not one who has read the book of God to disobey Him.” She replied, “Walk with me into this inner closet,”³ and lo! it was full of gold and jewels. Then she said, “This is all thine if thou consentest⁴ to my desire.” He answered, “Bring me⁵ water that I may wash,” and when he had washed, she brought him a handkerchief saturated⁶ with perfume and musk and ambergris, thinking that he might dry himself⁷ with it. So when he saw that she was in earnest,⁸ he said to her, “Thou must either give me leave to depart, or I will throw myself down from this place.” Now the height⁹ of it was eighty cubits in the air. She said, “Thou must consent,¹⁰ otherwise throw thyself down”; so he threw himself

¹ حَكَمَ فِي - لُاحِكَمَكَ فِي نَفْسِي “To empower one to do as he likes.”

² The man was an Israelite. The Muslim author makes a slip about the Injil.

³ خزانة “A secret closet for valuables”: often, in a two-storied house, under the stairs.

⁴ وافقه على “To agree with one about something.”

⁵ Read فَقَالَ آتِنِي Imp. fem. s., from آتَى.

⁶ فَمُغْنٍ p. p. of مُغْنٍ.

⁷ وَرَقَ نَشَفَ “To dry one’s self”; نَشَفَ “To dry, wipe”; وَرَقَ نَشَفَ “Blotting paper.”

⁸ جَدَّ : رَأَى مِنْهَا الْجِدَّ “Seriousness, earnestness.”

⁹ وَرَقَ عَلَ : عَلَ : عَلُوْا “To be high”; عَلَ “High.”

¹⁰ لَا بَدَّ Lit. “There is no avoiding (it).”

down, and God Almighty commanded the air to detain¹ him. Then the air held him and he remained standing in the air by the power of God Almighty.

Then spake God, whose glory be exalted, saying, "O Gabriel, hasten to my servant John, who is endangering his life through fear of me": and Gabriel hastened to him and set him upon the ground in safety. So look, O my brother, at the great fear² of this young man towards God the Mighty and Glorious; and had it not been for God's grace to him, he had surely fallen into shameful ways³ and sinfulness.⁴

STORY No. 39.

Al-Qazwīnī has related that a certain man of *Iṣfahān* was saddled with many debts⁵; so he left *Iṣfahān* and voyaged⁶ with some traders upon the sea of 'Umān. So the waves tossed them about until they came to the famous whirlpool⁷ in the sea of *Fāris*.⁸ Then the traders said to

¹ يَحْبِسُ , حَبَسَ "To confine, imprison, retain."

² The root-meaning of رَقَبَ is "To look for, or expect;" hence مَرَقَبَةً "Fear of God," because he who fears, looks for punishment.

³ فَوَاضِحٌ pl. of فَاضِحَةٌ, "Sins that expose to disgrace, or shame."

⁴ يَزَلُّ inf. n. of زَلَّ, "To slip; to make a mistake." It is bathos to put زَلَّ after فَوَاضِحٌ.

⁵ رَكِبَتْهُ دُونُ كَثِيرَةٍ, Lit. "Many debts burdened him."

⁶ رَكِبَ الْبَحْرَ.

⁷ دُرْدُورٌ.

the captain,¹ "Dost thou know a way of escape for us, so that we may attempt it?" He replied, "If one of you will give up² his life, we shall escape." Then said the debt-encumbered man of *Iṣfahān* to himself, "We are all in the jaws of death³ and I am already tired of life."⁴ Now there were several of his countrymen on board the ship, so he said to them, "Will ye swear to pay my debts and so free my conscience⁵ and I on my part will ransom⁶ you by my life; and will you treat my family as kindly as ye are able?"⁷ So they swore to him to do so, and even more than he made terms for. Then said the man of *Iṣfahān* to the captain, "What dost thou order me to do, for I have resigned myself to God, seeking your deliverance, if God Almighty wills it." The captain answered him, "I enjoin thee to stand for three days on the shore of this sea and to beat this drum night and day without relaxing⁸ in the beating."

¹ سَفِينَةٌ : سَفَانٌ "A ship."

² مَمَحَ (not مَمَحَ), aor. يَمَحُ (with ب of the thing), "To be liberal with a thing; to give it."

³ فِي مَوْقِفِ الْهَلَاكِ "In a situation of extreme danger."

⁴ كَرِهْتُ الْحَيَاةَ.

⁵ The term ذِمَّة is the moral obligation to fulfil ذِمَّة i.e., a compact, or covenant." Note the Arabic idiom, "Will you do so and so, and I on my part will—."

⁶ فِدْوً : بِفِدْيٍ, فِدَى "ransom."

⁷ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ note past tense, "as much as you could do": past tense more idiomatic than aorist.

⁸ يَفْتَرُّ فَرًّا Intrans.

He ¹ replied, "I will do so by the help of God," so they gave him¹ such water and provisions as was possible. The *Iṣfahānī* continues: "So I took the drum and the water and the food, and they took me to the island and placed me upon its shore, and I began beating the drum. Then the waters were agitated and the ship moved on before my eyes, and I remained looking until the ship vanished from my sight. So I began walking about in that island and came to a large tree, which had on it the like of a platform.² Then, when night came on, lo! there was a loud crash,³ and I looked and saw a bird of huge size alighting on that platform which was on the tree. So I hid myself from fear of it, and when day dawned the bird flapped its wings ⁴ and flew away; and when it was night it came again and alighted ⁵ upon the same spot as on the preceding night. So I approached it and it offered me no injury, ⁶ nor did it pay attention to ⁷ me at

¹ In the text, "*I* replied," and "So they gave me."

² شَيْءٌ سَطِيحٌ.

³ ^{هَدَّةٌ} "The sound of the fall of a wall or the like": ^{إِنْهَادُ الْحَائِطِ}

"The wall fell down."

⁴ ^{نَقَضَ الثَّوبَ} (نَقَضَ) ^{إِنْقَضَ} He shook the garment to remove the dust: ^{إِنْقَضَ} "To tremble, shiver": ^{إِنْقَضَ الْمَجْلِسُ} (from ^{فَضَّ}),

"The assembly broke up."

⁵ ^{حَطَّ} in the sense of "to alight" is elliptical. It is from ^{حَطَّ رَحْلَهُ}

"He put down his camel's saddle," meaning "He stayed."

⁶ لَمْ يَعْزِشْ لِي بِسَرٍّ.

⁷ ^{إِلْتَفَاتٌ} — ^{إِلْتَفَاتٌ} "Showing attention to persons; respect, courtesy."

all, and it flew away again in the morning. When it was the third evening and the bird came in its usual way and sat in its place, I went up and sat without fear or fright near to it until it flapped its wings, when I caught hold of and suspended myself to ¹ one of its feet, with both hands.² So it flew with me until it was broad day-light ³; then I looked below me, and could see nothing but the depths ⁴ of the sea; and I was nigh relinquishing hold of its foot and casting myself down, owing to the severity of the distress I had gone through. I controlled myself for a time and then looked, and lo! there were villages and buildings ⁵ below me; so I rejoiced and all my distress vanished; and when the bird neared the earth, I threw myself upon a heap ⁷ of straw in a threshing-floor,⁸ and the bird flew away. Then people gathered round me and marvelled at me, and carried me to their chief; and there came to me a man who understood my speech. So I told them my story, and they considered me as one blessed and auspicious,⁹ and honoured me; and the chief ordered money to be given me. Then I stayed some days among them; and one day as I went to recreate myself, I beheld, anchoring¹⁰ there, the very ship I had been in; and when [my

بِيَدَيَّ لَتَيْتَهُمَا. but يَكَلَّتَا يَدَيَّ ¹ نَمَلَقْتُ بِ ²

³ i.e., the forenoon.

⁴ لَحْجَةً "The deep; the main body of the sea."

⁵ قَرْيَةٍ pl. of قَرْيَ عَمَارَةٍ pl. of عَمَارٌ ⁶

⁷ صَبْرَةً "a heap," gen. of grain. ⁸ بِيَادِرٍ pl. of بِيَادِرٌ

⁹ بَرَكَهَ : نَبَرَكَوَابِي "blessing."

¹⁰ أَنْجَرَ = مَرَسَاةٌ "To anchor"; أَرَسِي, أَرَسَى

shipmates] saw me, they hastened to me and questioned me as to what had befallen me. So I told them; and they conveyed me to my family, and I got from them more than had been agreed, and returned well and rich, as well as safe."

STORY No. 40.

It is said that news reached the King of China of a painter who was skilled in painting and drawing, in the country of the Greeks; so he sent for him and had him brought¹; and ordered him to execute something of what he could do in the way of painting and drawing, as a specimen, which he could hang up according to his custom at the gate of the palace. So he depicted for him on a sheet,² the figure of a green ear of corn standing erect, and on it a sparrow; and perfected³ its colouring and shape, so that no one who looked at it had any doubt but that it was a sparrow on a green ear of corn; and missed⁴ from it nothing but speech and movement. So that delighted the king, and he ordered it to be suspended, and hastened to assign⁵ the painter maintenance so long as the picture should remain hanging.

¹ أَشْخَصَ "To go from one place to another; to journey." أَشْخَصَ causal.

² رَقْعَةٌ "A piece of cloth": pl. رِقَاعٌ; also "A note, or billet."

³ أَتَقَنَّ , يُتَقَّنُ inf. n. اتَّقَنَّ "To perform or execute skilfully."

⁴ بَنَكَرَ , يُنْكَرُ "To say of a thing that it is not right, or real."

⁵ اَدْرَارُ inf. n. of اَدَّرَ "To make milk to flow abundantly; to provide for one the means of subsistence." لِلَّهِ دَرَّةٌ فَارِسًا "What a fine horseman he is!"

Thus a year elapsed save a few days, and no one could point out a fault or blemish in it. Then there came an old man advanced in years, and he looked at the picture and said, "This has a fault." So he was brought before the king, and the painter and the picture were also brought; and he said, "What is the fault in it? Extricate thyself from this pass¹ by clear proofs² and logic, otherwise repentance and punishment will befall thee." Then spake the old man, "May God prosper the king and inspire him to what is right,³ of what object is this⁴ the representation?" The king answered, "The picture is that of an ear of corn standing on its stem, and upon it a sparrow." The old man said, "May God bless the king, verily the sparrow has no fault in it, but the blemish is in the position of the ear of corn." The king exclaimed, wild with anger⁵ against the old man, "And what is the fault?" He replied, "The fault lies in the erectness of the blade of corn; for, as is generally known, when a sparrow alights on an ear of corn he bends it—by reason of the weight of the sparrow and the feebleness of the stem of the corn-ear; now had the ear of corn been crooked⁶ and bent, that would have been the perfection of pose and of art." Then the king agreed to this, and admitted⁷ it.

¹ *Lit.* "Do thou come out of that which thou hast fallen in."

² بَرَجَ ظَاهِر "In a clear way"; also by "clear proof."

³ إلهام = إلهام السداد "inspiration."

⁴ هذا الموضوع "This thing placed here."

⁵ اِمْتَنَجَ غَضًا "To get in a passion"; *Lit.* "He was mixed up through anger."

⁶ معرج "Crooked, bent"; from اَعْوَج "To be crooked."

معرج "Zig-zag," p.p. of اَعْوَج.

يَسْلِمُ، يَسْلَمُ.

STORY No. 41.

It is related of *Ash-Sharīf-l-Murtazq*, with whom God be pleased,¹ that he was seated in an upper room² of his which looked upon the street, when there passed by him *Ibn-l-Muṭarriz*,³ the poet, trailing along a pair of worn-out⁴ shoes, which were stirring up⁵ the dust. So he ordered him to be brought before him, and said to him, "Repeat those verses of thine in which thou sayest:—

'If my camels⁶ bring me not to thee, may they never go to water⁷ nor may they graze upon the herbage⁸ [i.e., let them die].'

So he repeated them to him, and when he came to this line, *Ash-Sharīf* pointed to his worn-out shoes and said, "Was this one of your camels?" *Ibn-l-Muṭarriz* bent down his head for a time, and then said, "Because the gifts of our lord *Ash-Sharīf*⁹ are now like his speech:—

'Take thou sleep from my eyelids for I have given away¹⁰ sleep to lovers.'¹¹

¹ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ = رَضَى. عَلَالٌ pl. عِلَالَةٌ.

² *Muṭarriz*, "Embroiderer."

³ *Muṭarriz*, "Embroiderer."

⁴ *Bāl* from *بَالِي*, *يَبَلَى* "It was, or became, old and worn-out."

⁵ *يُثِيرُ*, *يُثِيرُ*, "To stir up"; *يُثَرُّ*, *يُثَرُّ*, "To be stirred up."

⁶ *رَكَابٌ* pl. of *رَكُوبَةٌ* "A female riding camel."

⁷ *يُرَدُّ*, *يُرَدُّ*, "To go to water, to drink"; also, "To come, arrive."

⁸ *عُشْبٌ* "Fresh, green herbage." *حَشِيشٌ* "Dry herbage."

⁹ *Sharīf*, a title especially applied to the descendants of Muḥammad. This one was a poet.

¹⁰ *خَلَعَ*, *يَخْلَعُ* "Orig. means, "To take off (a garment) from one's self, and bestow it upon another": *خَلْعَةٌ* "A robe of honour"

¹¹ I don't want sleep as I am in love; give my sleep to lovers who are in want of it. There is no sound sense in these words.

So my camels have become as thou seest; for thou hast given that of which thou art not master to one that will not accept it”¹ Then *Ash-Sharīf* was put to shame by him and ordered a gift² to be given him, so they gave it to him.

STORY No. 42.

It is said that *Al-Ḥajjāj* went out one day for an outing,³ and when he had finished his diversion he sent away his companions, and remained alone by himself. He chanced to meet an old man of ‘Ijl,⁴ and said to him “From whence comest thou, O old man?” He said, “From this village.” He asked, “How do you find your rulers?”⁵ He replied, “They are the very worst of rulers; they oppress the people and look on their property as their own lawful right.”⁶ He said, “And what sayest thou of *Al-Ḥajjāj*?” He answered, “None worse than he has ever ruled over ‘Irāq. May God confound⁷ him and confound the man who appointed him governor.” He asked, “Knowest thou who I am?” He said, “No.” He said, “I am

¹ i.e., you are in love and have no sleep, yet you give away what you don’t possess (i.e., sleep), to lovers who don’t want it, as they cannot sleep; so nothing is given or taken.

² جَوَائِزُ pl. جَائِزَةٌ “Present, gratuity.”

³ مَتَنَزُّهُ “to recreate himself; promenading”: تَنَزُّهُ “Recreation, promenade.”

⁴ عَجَلٌ, name of a tribe of Arabs.

⁵ عَمَلٌ pl. of عَمَلٌ.

⁶ يَسْتَحِلُّ, إِسْتَحْلٌ “To deem lawful.”

⁷ يَبْعِدُ الله “May God remove him far from good.”

Al-Hajjāj.” Then said the other, “Knowest thou who I am?” He said, “No.” The man said, “I am the madman of the tribe of ‘Ijl; I have fits twice a day.” So *Al-Hajjāj* laughed and ordered a handsome present¹ to be given him.

STORY No. 43.

A certain man of learning said, “I was once present in a gathering² at the house of one of the nobles of Baghdād, and he had before him a tray of almond lozenges,³ when a madman entered, who was pleasant spoken; he said, “What is this, O Prince?” So he threw him one, and he said, “The second of two, when they two were in the cave.”⁴ So he threw him another, and he said, “Therefore we strengthened them with a third.”⁵ So he gave him a third, and he said, “Take therefore four birds.”⁶ So he threw him a fourth, and he said, “Five, and their dog was the sixth.”⁷ So he pushed towards him a fifth, and he said, “In six days.”⁸

¹ مَلَّةٌ “A gift” from وَصَلَ “To give.”

² مَجْلِسٌ “An assembly room; also the people in it.”

³ لَوْزَيْنَجٍ (لَوْزٌ “Almonds”), sweetmeats shaped like a lozenge, i.e., diamond-shaped.

⁴ Qur’ān, ix. 40. This refers to the taking refuge of Muḥammad and Abū Bakr in a cave when they fled from Makkah.

⁵ Qur. xxxvi. 13. Read عَزَّزَ: فَعَزَّزْنَا مِمَّا for فَعَزَّزْنَا “To strengthen,” from the root عَزَّ “strength.”

⁶ Qur. ii. 262.

⁷ Qur. xviii. 21. This refers to the sleepers of Ephesus.

⁸ Qur. vii. 52. The days of creation.

So he made them six, and he said, "Seven heavens one above the other."¹ So he made them seven, and he said, "Eight [cattle] paired together."² So he threw to him an eighth,³ and he said, "And there were in the city nine [men]."⁴ So he threw this [*i.e.*, the ninth] to him, and he said, "This period is ten complete days."⁵ So he completed them by a tenth,⁶ and he said, "Eleven stars."⁷ So he bestowed this upon him, and he said, "The number of months with God is twelve

¹ Qur. lxvii. 3. Read طَبَّاقًا : سَبْعٌ inf. n. of طَبَّقَ which *lit.* means "The putting a thing upon or above another thing of the same size"; or طَبَّاقًا here means ذَات طَبَّاقٍ pl. of طَبَّق or of طَبَّاقَة "composed of stages."

² Read ثَمَانِيَةً for ثَمَانِيَةٌ. Qur. vi. 144 and xxxix. 8. أَزْوَاجٌ is pl. of زَوْج which means "One of a pair or couple": زَوْجَانِ. "A pair, or couple." According to some زَوْجٌ signifies *two* of anything, and زَوْجَانِ "two pairs"; but this apparently only in case of things spoken of in pairs, as boots for instance.

³ *Lit.* "The eighth," *i.e.*, 'that one which makes eight.'

⁴ Qur. xxvii. 49. رَهْطٌ "A number of men from 3 to 10. نَفَرٌ from 3 to 7. رَهْطٌ is a word having a pl. meaning like نَفَرٌ and قَوْمٌ and مَعْشَرٌ etc., without any proper sing.

⁵ Qur. ii. 192. This refers to ten days of fasting, in case of those who cannot offer a sacrifice in the pilgrimage.

⁶ فَأَكْمَلَهَا بِعَاشِرَةٍ *Lit.* "So he completed them by (giving him) a tenth."

⁷ Qur. xii. 4. Joseph's dream.

months.”¹ So he completed for him twelve, and he said, “If there be twenty of you.”² So he pushed towards him twenty, and he said, “They will overcome two hundred.”³ Then he ordered the tray to be handed to him, and said, “Eat, glutton,⁴ and may God never fill thy belly.” The madman exclaimed, “I swear by God, if thou hadst not done this, I would have quoted for thee the text, ‘And we sent him to a hundred thousand persons or more.’”⁵

STORY NO. 44.

It is said that *Al-Hādī Al-‘Abbāsī* was devoted to⁶ a handmaiden named *Ghādir*, who was one of the most beautiful of women in face, and the most cultured, and most gracious in disposition, and the most melodious in voice. So one night while she was entertaining⁷ him and singing to him, his colour suddenly changed and signs of sorrow appeared in him. She said, “What is the matter with the Prince of the Faithful? May God send him naught distasteful.” He answered,

¹ Qur. ix. 36. Read اِنِّى for اِنِّى; and later, اِنِّى for اِنِّى.

² Qur. viii. 66. In *Jihād*, or Holy war.

³ Qur. viii. 66. Read يَغْلِبُوا for يَغْلِبُ; and مَا تَقِينِ for مَا تَقِينِ.

⁴ أَكَلٌ. intens. from أَكَل.

⁵ Qur. xxxii. 149. The pron. refers to the prophet Jonas.

⁶ أَغْرَى pass., “To be attached to or fond of; to be eagerly desirous of; to love.” أَغْرَى “To incite.”

⁷ نَادَمَ “To keep company with one, especially in feasts and parties.” نَدِيمٌ “Boon-companion.”

"It has just occurred to me that I shall die and my brother *Hārūn* succeed to ¹ the Khalifate after me, and that thou wilt be with him just as thou art with me now." She replied, "May God not grant me to live ² after thee," and began soothing ³ him and banishing ⁴ this thought from his mind. He said, "Thou must surely swear to me a great oath ⁵ that thou wilt not go nigh him after me." So she swore to that effect,⁶ and he bound her by covenants and binding promises. Then he went out and sent for his brother *Hārūn*, and made him swear ⁷ that he would not consort with ⁸ *Ghādir* after him, and took from him the same conditions and pledges as he took from her. Only one month elapsed before *Al-Hādī* died and the office of Khalifah passed to *Hārūn*, who sent for the damsel, and when she presented herself, ordered her to begin and entertain him. She replied, "What will the Prince of the Faithful

¹ وَلِيَّ , وَلِيَّ "To govern, assume charge of."

² بَقَاءُ : يَبْقَى , أَبْقَى "Life, existence."

³ يَلْطَفُ , لَا لَفَ "To address one in a kind manner."

⁴ أَزَالَ , يُزِيلُ "To remove":
⁵ يَزُولُ , ذَالَ "To cease to be or exist."
causal.

⁶ مَغْلُظَةً pl. of يَمِينُ "An oath." مَغْلُظَةً "Made strong or forcible ;
also confirmed, ratified." So also غَلِيظَةً.

⁷ مَوَائِقُ pl. of مَيْثَاقُ "Engagement; compact"; from the root
⁸ يَذِقُ , رَذِقَ "To confide in."

⁹ حَلَفَ "To swear." حَلَّفَ "To make to swear."

¹⁰ يَخْلُو , خَلَا (with بِ) , lit. "To be alone with."

do with regard to those oaths and promises ? ” He answered, “ I have atoned ¹ both for thee and for myself (for breaking them),” and they two began to keep company together, ² and he became so greatly attached to her, ³ that he could not endure separation from her for an hour. One night she woke up suddenly in alarm, ⁴ and he asked her, “ What is the matter with thee ? May my soul be thy sacrifice ! ” She answered, “ I beheld thy brother repeating these verses : —

‘ Thou hast broken ⁵ thy compact with me after I had joined ⁶ the dwellers of the tombs ;

And thou hast forgotten me and been faithless to ⁷ thine oaths, which were false ⁸ and base. ⁹

¹ كَفَّرَ “ To cover over, expiate (with acc. of crime, and عَنْ of pers.).

² Read أَخَذَا for أَمَّا.

³ “ She occupied a great position in his heart.”

⁴ مَذْمُورَةٌ “ frightened.”

⁵ أَخْلَفَ الرَّعْدَ : يُخْلِفُ , أَخْلَفَ “ He broke his promise, or failed to perform it.”

⁶ جَارٌ “ A neighbour.” جَاوَرَ “ To become the neighbour of.”

⁷ حَدَّثَ حَدَّثَ فِي يَمِينِهِ aor. حَدَّثَ فِي يَمِينِهِ inf. n. حَدَّثَ “ He violated, or broke, his oath.”

⁸ زُورٌ “ A lie, falsehood ; ” also, “ What is false.” Subs. and adj.

شَهَادَةُ الزُّورِ “ False witness.” زَوَّرَ “ To falsify, counterfeit.”

رَقَّةٌ مَزُورَةٌ “ False bond.”

⁹ بَعِثَ فَاَجْرَةً “ Lying.” فَاَجْرَةٌ adj. pl. of فَاَجْرٌ “ A false oath.”

And thou hast wedded my brother treacherously. True spake he who named thee *Qhādīr*.

May thy new lover ¹ give thee no delight, ² and may the circles of misfortune ³ never roll away from thee.

Before morning may thou follow me and be where I am now.'

And I think that I shall follow him to-night." The *Khalifah* answered, "May my soul be thy sacrifice; these are only confused dreams."⁴ She replied, "It is not so," and began trembling with terror, and was convulsed before him until she died. Verily, I say that the poet spoke truth when he said, "Every one has a part in his name"; and as to the breaking ⁵ of covenants, and want of honour ⁶ and fidelity, they are characteristic of the majority of women, and excellent is the poet who has said :—

"Verily, women are devils, created for us; we take refuge with God from the wickedness of devils."

¹ الْفَ "A constant companion; a mate."

² هَذَا لَا يَهْنِكُ for لَا يَهْنِكُ "To give joy to."

³ دَائِرَةٌ "A turn of fortune: and especially "an evil accident, a misfortune." دَارَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الدَّوَابُّ "Calamities befell them; " also, "They suffered defeat."

⁴ أَصْغَاتُ أَحْلَامٍ : ضِغَتْ "A handful of green and dry grass mixed." أَصْغَاكَ (pl.) "Things confusedly mixed together."

⁵ مَرُوءٍ "Manly qualities: from مَرءٌ 'man."

⁶ نَقَضَ "To undo; untwist; break," of a building, a rope, a compact, or a sale.

And he erred ¹ who said :—

“ Verily, women are fragrant plants, created for you ; and every one of you desireth ² to smell the fragrant herbs.”

STORY NO. 45.

It is said when *Al-Manṣūr* had made *Rabīʿ bn ʿYūnus* his minister,³ *Rabīʿ*— a man of sense and breeding—re-
frained from ever making ⁴ any request to him. *Al-Manṣūr*
thought well of this,⁵ so he summoned him one day and
said, “ O *Rabīʿ* ! dost thou shrink from representing thy
needs to the like of me ? ” ⁶ He answered, “ O Prince of the
Faithful, I did not abstain because I had found elsewhere to
go to, but because I did not wish to be a nuisance.” ⁷ The
Khalifah said, “ Represent to me whatsoever thou desirest.”

¹ أَخْطَأَ also يَخْطِئُ “ To miss the mark.” خَطَأٌ “ error ”
حَاطِنَةٌ “ sin.”

² اِشْتَهَى and شَهْوَةً “ To wish for, desire eagerly.” اِشْتَهَى
“ Appetite.”

³ اِسْتَوْرَزَ “ To take, or choose, as a وزير.”

⁴ جَعَلَ لَا بِأَوَّلِهِ I.e., “ He refrained from the very beginning.”

⁵ اِسْتَأْظَرَ Lit. “ To deem beautiful, or graceful.”

⁶ اِنْقَبَضَ : اِنْقَبَضَ عَنْ مِثْلِي بِحَوَالِجِي “ To shrink,” contr. of اِنْبَسَطَ

حَاجَةٍ pl. of حَوَالِجٍ

⁷ خَفَّفَ عَنْهُ : خَفَّفَ عَنْ تَحْقِيلِ “ He made light his burden ; he
relieved him.”

He replied, "O Prince of the Faithful, my wish is that thou shouldst love my son, *Al-Fazl*." The *Khalifah* said to him, "Woe be unto thee, for affection is not born all at once, but is born from causes." He answered, "God has given thee the road to it." He said, "And what is that?" He replied, "Bestow gifts¹ upon him, for when thou hast done so he will love thee; and if he love thee thou wilt love him." The narrator continues,² "Thereupon *Al-Manṣūr* smiled and said to him, "Woe unto thee! verily, thou hast rendered him dear³ to me before aught of this has happened. But tell me, why hast thou chosen love and nothing else?" He replied, "O Prince of the Faithful, if thou lovest him, the least service⁴ he does thee will be great in thine eyes; and the greatest of his offences will be small in thine eyes; and any request he makes thee will be granted;⁵ and all his sins against thee will be forgiven."

STORY No. 46.

I have seen in a certain history that a desert Arab once fell ill in the desert with fever, during the dog-days.⁶ So he

¹ *أَنْعَمَ* inf. n. *أَنْعَمَ*, "To confer benefits upon (with acc. of thing and *فَإِلَى* of pers.).

² This is the signification of *قال*

³ *أَحَبَّ* "To love." *حَبَّبَ إِلَى* "To make an object of love to."

⁴ *أَحْسَنَ* inf. n. of *أَحْسَنَ* "To do well, act with kindness."

contr. of *أَسَاءَ* inf. n. *أَسَاءَ* "To do evil."

⁵ *مَقْضَى* pp. of *قَضَى* "To grant, accomplish."

⁶ *قَيْظٌ* "Summer; or the most intense heat in summer."

came to "The Nullah"¹ at noon² and stripped himself³ in the heat, and smeared⁴ his body with olive oil, and began to roll⁵ in the sun on the pebbles; and he said, "Thou shalt know, O fever, what misfortune has come on thee, and with whom thou hast been afflicted;⁶ thou hast left the nobles and men of wealth⁷ and alighted on me." And he continued rolling about, until he began to sweat, when the fever left him. Then he got up, and next day he heard some one saying, "The Governor of the city has fever⁸ since yesterday." He exclaimed, "Verily, I swear by God, it was I that sent it to him." Then he turned and fled.⁹

¹ أَبْطَحٌ as also بَطْحَاءٌ, means "A wide water-course, or the channel of a torrent, in which are fine pebbles." الْأَبْطَحُ "The Abtah" here refers to the valley near Mecca, which is also called الْمَدْحَبُ

² ظَهْرٌ = ظَهْرٌ "Mid-day; noon."

³ نَعْرَى "To strip one's self naked." عُرِيَ "Naked."

⁴ طَلَى بِالْفِصَّةِ "To gild." طَلَى بِالذَّمْبِ "To anoint." يَطْلِي، طَلَى "To silver."

⁵ نَقَلَبَ "To roll"; but نَمَرَّغَ "To roll in the dust."

⁶ أُبْتَلِيَ pass. of اِتَّلَى "To be afflicted by disease, etc. اِبْتَلَى "To afflict (God): بَلَاءٌ and بَلِيَّةٌ "Trouble, affliction."

⁷ ثَرَاءٌ = ثَرَوَةٌ "Wealth."

⁸ حَمَّ، pass. "To be afflicted with, be sick of, fever." أَحَمَّهُ "He (God) caused him to be sick of fever."

⁹ رَمَى هَارِبًا, Lit. "He went away fleeing."

STORY No. 47.

It is said that a certain learned man had a quarrel with¹ his wife, and he determined² to divorce her. She said to him, "Remember the long time we have lived together." He answered, "I swear by God, thou hast in my eyes no other fault but that."

STORY No. 48.

It is said that there was a woman in *Al-Madīnah* whose eye was so evil³ that she glanced at nothing without ruining it⁴; and she came to visit the sick *Ash'ab* when he was at the point of death,⁵ and addressing his daughter in a faint voice saying, "O daughter, when I am dead, do not lament⁶ nor bewail over me,⁷ lest men, hearing thee say 'Alas! father, I

¹ تَخَاصَمَ مَعَ "To have an altercation with"; خُصُومَةٌ "Altercation, litigation." خَصَمٌ "Adversary, antagonist."

² عَزَمَ عَلَى "To determine on"; عَزْمٌ "Fixed determination."

³ شَدِيدَةُ الْأَصَابَةِ بِالْعَيْنِ Lit. "Her smiting with the evil eye was severe."

⁴ دَمَّرَ, inf. n. تَهْمِيرٌ "To destroy utterly." دَمَارٌ "Utter perdition."

⁵ أَحْضَرَ: مُحَاضِرٌ pass. from the root حَضَرَ "He was visited by the angel of death."

⁶ بَنُوْحٌ "To wail; to bewail a dead person."

⁷ نَدَبَ "To call"; أَنْدَبْتُ means "I summon thee to prayer, summon thee to fast, to read the Qur'ān" (and to other acts of his

call thee for prayers and fasting and learning and reading of the Qur'ān,' give thee the lie and curse *me*." Then *Ash'ab* turned round, and seeing the woman, covered¹ his face with his sleeve and said to her, "I beg thee, by God, O So and So! if thou has approved of² anything in my present state, then bless the Prophet and his kindred."³ She answered, "May thine eye be hot (from tears),⁴ in what state art thou that I should approve it? For, thou art at the last gasp." "I know that," said *Ash'ab*; "but I thought that thou mightest have thought good the lightness of death on me, and the easiness of my passing away,⁵ and so my condition might grow worse." So she left him abusing him, and those round laughed, even his children and women-folk. Then he died, and may God Almighty have mercy upon him!

STORY No. 49.

It is said that *Zabbat** *bn** *Udd* had two sons, *Sa'd* and *Su'aid*, who both set out on a journey, and *Sa'd* perished, while *Su'aid* returned in safety. Then their father, *Zabbah*,

life); hence, نَدَبَ "To enumerate the good qualities of one dead." It is an Eastern custom when bewailing the dead to cry, "Who is now left to pray, who to fast, etc., etc."

¹ يَغْطِي, غَطَى "To cover." غَطَاءَ "A cover."

² In order to strike with the evil-eye, the striker must admire something.

³ This blessing averts the evil-eye.

⁴ i.e., May you shed hot tears. The tears of sorrow are said to be hot; those of joy, cool.

⁵ سهولة الذرع, Lit. "The ease of my death agony."

went forth after that, in the sacred months,¹ to travel and enquire about his son, and he was accompanied by *Al-Hāriṣ* *bn* *Ka'b*. So one day while² they were talking together as they went on, they passed by a certain spot and *Al-Hāriṣ* exclaimed, "I once met in this spot a youth, of such and such appearance, and I slew him, and this is his sword." Then *Zabbah* said to him, "Show me the sword"; so he gave it to him, and lo! it was the sword of his son, *Sa'd*. Then *Zabbah* said to him, "Conversation turns into many channels."³ Then *Zabbah* slew *Al-Hāriṣ*. So people reproached him for violating the sacred month, and he answered, "The sword did its work before your blame"⁴; and this passed into a proverb.

STORY NO. 50.

A blind man⁵ came to a horse-dealer and said to him, "Procure for me an ass, which shall be neither so small as to be scoffed at, nor so large as to be conspicuous; which ambles quickly⁶ when the road is clear, and goes gently when there

¹ The four months of amnesty, *Zu'l-Qa'dah*, *Zu'l-Hijjah* *Muharram* and *Rajab*.

² *فبينما هما* should be *فبينما هما* = *فبينما هما*

³ A proverb used when a story is related that calls to mind another. *شَجْنٌ* is pl. of *شَجْنٌ* "A road in a valley."

⁴ *Lit.* "The sword preceded the censure"; i.e., it is too late to say anything."

⁵ *كَفَّ بَصْرُهُ* from *كَفَّ بَصْرُهُ* "He became blind," *lit.* "His sight was withheld."

⁶ The orig. meaning of *تَدَفَّقَ* is, "It poured forth copiously (water)." Hence (*تَدَفَّقَ* with *لِ* or *إِلَى*) "To hasten to do anything."

is much crowding; which does not dash against¹ pillars² nor carry me under mats³ (i.e., awnings); which shall be patient when I lessen⁴ its food, and grateful when I increase it; which shall start at once⁵ when I mount it and go to sleep when I leave it alone." The dealer answered him, "Wait: if God metamorphose⁶ the Qāṣi into an ass, I will supply your want."

STORY No. 51.

Al-Kalbī has narrated on the authority of a man of the house of *Umayyah*, who said, "I was once in the presence of *Mu'āwiyah* when he had given a general permission to people to have free access to him. So there entered a woman, who raised her veil from a face as beauteous as the moon, and she had with her two handmaidens of hers. She began to harangue the people, at which every one there was amazed.⁷ Then she added, "It was by the decree of God

¹ صَادَمَ "To knock against." اصطدامٌ and تصادمٌ "A collision."

² سَوَارٍ pl. of سَارِيَّةٌ "A column of stone."

³ بُورِي pl. of بَارِيَّةٌ "A mat made of reeds."

⁴ قَلَّلَ = (inf. n. اِقْلَالٌ) يُقَلِّلُ , أَقَلَّ "To make less."

⁵ هَامَ, prop. "To wander about like a madman." Colloq. "To rush madly."

⁶ مَسَخَ "To transform into a worse shape." مَسَخَهُ اللَّهُ قَرَدًا "God transformed him into an ape."

⁷ بُهَتَ pass. "To be astonished, stunned." Also بَهَتَ and بُهَتَ : the pron. لَهَا refers to خُطْبَةٍ.

that thou didst honour¹ *Ziyād*, and adopt him for thy brother, and gave him a lineage in the family of *Sufyān*,² and then set him over the necks of mankind³ to shed their blood without law⁴ and without right, and to perpetuate iniquities⁵ without fear of the punishment of God when doing so, and to commit the greatest sins, neither fearing the majesty of God,⁶ nor thinking that he has a here-

¹ قَرَّبْتُ "Took near thee, i.e., honoured."

² *Ziyād* was an illegitimate son of Abū Sufyān, father of Mu'āwiyah. In Muslim times an illegitimate son could not be called by the name of his father, but before Islām a father had the power to give an illegitimate son his name. This *Ziyād* is known in history from this circumstance as زياد ابن ابيه, *Ziyād*, the son of his father."

³ وَلَيْتَهُ عَلَى رِقَابِ الْعِبَادِ "Set him over men." رِقَابٌ pl. of رَقَبَةٌ "The neck," synecdoche for man.

⁴ بِغَيْرِ حِلٍّ *Lit.* "Without its being lawful so to do."

⁵ الْمَحَارِمُ an anomalous pl. of حَرَامٌ, "Things forbidden by God."

إِنْتَهَاكَ (إِفْتَعَلَ) "To disparage the value of a thing," hence إِنْتَهَاكَ

الْمَحَارِمِ "The committal of things forbidden, considering them of

no account." إِنْتَهَاكَ is from the root نَهَكَ. and not from هَكَ السَّرَّارِ

"To tear off the curtain, hence to dishonour."

⁶ رَجَا "to hope; to fear," must in the sense of "fear" be preceded by a negative. This passage is taken from the Qurʾān مَا لَكُمْ

لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا "What aileth you that ye fear not the majesty of God (as shown by your disobeying him)?"

after.¹ Now, to-morrow² his deeds will be shown (to God) in thy sheet, and thou shalt then know³ the sins he has committed⁴ before God. So what wilt thou say to thy Lord, O son of *Abū Sufyān*, to-morrow? And lo! now, the greater part of thy life has gone and there is only left the lesser⁵ and worser part of it." He replied, "Who art thou?" She answered, "A woman of the tribe of *Zakwān*.⁶ *Ziyād*, who claims to belong to the family of *Sufyān*, has sprung upon⁷ the inheritance I received from my father and mother, and taken possession of it by violence, and made himself master of my land⁸—my sustenance.⁹ So if thou dealest righteously and justly, well and good; but if not, I commit thee and *Ziyād* unto God Almighty; and if my wrongs are unredressed by *Ziyād* and thee, there is a just Judge who will give me justice against thee (hereafter)." *Mu'āwiyah* was confounded and amazed at her eloquence. Then he exclaimed, "Why does *Ziyād* interfere with those who publish our iniquities?"¹⁰ Then he said to his Secretary

¹ الْمَعَادُ "The ultimate state of existence"; syn. الْآخِرَةُ.

² i.e., on the day of Judgment.

³ رَقَفَ عَلَى "To know, ascertain."

⁴ اجْتَرَمَ "To commit a sin." جُرَيْمُهُ and جُرْمُ "A sin, crime."

⁵ بَسِيرٌ relative of بَسِيرٌ "Little, or small, in quantity."

⁶ This tribe was famous for its eloquence."

⁷ يَنْبُ رَوَّابٌ عَلَى "Land yielding revenue." ضَيْعَةٌ⁸

⁹ It is said of sustenance, يُمْسِكُ الرِّمَقَ "It stays, or arrests, the last breath," i.e., it maintains the strength.

¹⁰ الْمَسَاوِي an aomalous pl. of سوء or pl. of مَسَاوِيَّةٌ, "Vices, faults, or acts of disobedience."

“ Write to *Ziyād* to give back to her her land, and to return her what is her due.”

STORY No. 52.

It is said that a certain philosopher for a time stuck to the door of *Kisrā* with some request, but he paid no attention to him. So he wrote four lines ¹ on a sheet of paper, and gave it to the chamberlain. The first line was, “ Necessity and hope have brought me ² to thee ”: the second, “ The destitute ³ cannot restrain himself from pressing ⁴ his request ”: the third, “ To depart without any gain is a cause for rejoicing to one’s enemies ”: and the fourth, “ Either a *yes*, which will crown my desires, or a *no*, which will give relief.” When *Kisrā* read them, he gave him ⁵ a thousand dinars for each line.

STORY No. 53.

It is said that a certain Arab went to *Al-Mu’tasim*, and he brought him nigh ⁶ unto himself and made him his

¹ *أَسْطُرٌّ* pl. of *سَطْرٌ*; also pl. *مَطْرُورٌ*.

² *أَقْدَمَ* “ To cause to come ”; causal of *قَدِمَ*.

³ *عَدِيمٌ* “ Poor, needy ”; *عَدَمٌ* and *عَدْمٌ* “ poverty, destitution.”

⁴ *طَالَبٌ* inf. n. *مُطَالَبَةٌ* “ To seek or demand of one, a right or due.”

⁵ *رَفَعَ* “ To put the royal seal or signature to ”: here, “ To sign an order for payment ”: *تَرْفِيعٌ* “ A written answer on the petition,” and hence “ signature.”

⁶ *يَدْنِي, أَدْنَى* “ To bring near as a mark of favour.”

boon companion, so that he used to enter to the harem¹ without asking leave. Now the Khalifah had an envious minister, who became jealous of² the Bedouin and bore him envy. He said to himself, "Some stratagem must be used against this Bedouin, for he has captured the heart of the Prince of the Faithful, and ousted me."³ So he began to cajole⁴ the Bedouin, until he brought him to his house and prepared for him food, and he put a great deal of garlic in it.⁵ And when the Bedouin had eaten, he said to him, "Beware of going near the Prince lest he should smell the odour of garlic and be annoyed⁶ by it, for he detests the smell of it." Then the minister went to the Prince of the Faithful, and said to him in private, "The Bedouin says of thee to people, that the Prince of the Faithful has a foul breath."⁷ So when the Bedouin came, *Al-Mu'tasim* sent for him, and as he

¹ حَرِيمٌ "The women's apartments"; also colloquially, "A man's wives, or all veiled women of his household." By *ḥarim* is meant that portion of the palace where are the women's apartments; it could hardly be possible for a Muslim to allow a stranger to enter the actual apartments of the women.

² غَيْرَةً : يَغَارُ , غَارَ (مِنْ) "Jealousy, also a nice sense of honour as regards women."

³ أَبْعَدَنِي "Has driven me far."

⁴ نَلَّفَ (with ب) "To treat with marked kindness, to be sweet and polite to."

⁵ أَكْثَرَ فِيهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرِ

⁶ يَتَأَذَى , تَأَذَى "To be annoyed; to suffer what is disagreeable."

⁷ رُبَخْرٌ adj. "Stinking-breathed."

approached him he put his sleeve over his mouth, fearing lest the Prince should detect¹ the odour of garlic. When the Prince saw him cover his mouth with his sleeve, he thought to himself "Certainly, what the Minister said of the Bedouin is true." So *Al-Mu'taqim* wrote a letter to one of his Governors, saying in it, "When this, my letter, reaches you, sever the neck of the bearer of it." Then he summoned the Bedouin and made over to him the letter, saying to him, "Go with this to So and So and bring² an answer speedily." Then the Bedouin obeyed the mandate³ of *Al-Mu'taqim* and took the letter, and went out from before him. Now, while he was at the gate, the minister met him and said, "Whither art thou going?" He said, "I am setting out with a letter of the Prince of the Faithful to such and such a Governor of his." The minister said within himself, "This Bedouin will obtain much wealth from this commission"⁴; so he said to him, "What wouldst thou say if some one were to free thee from the trouble attaching⁵ to thy journey, and to give thee two thousand dinars?" He replied, "Thou art our chief and our ruler and whatever thou thinkest right⁶ I will do." He said, "Give me the letter." So he made it over to him, and the minister gave him two thousand dinars. Then the minister

¹ يَنْفِثُ شَمًّا "To smell."

² جِيءَ Impera. of جَاءَ. Read مَرِيئًا for مَرِيئًا.

³ مَرْمُومٌ : اِمْتَنَلْ مَا رَسَمَ بِهِ "A mandate"; in mod. Ar. "A written mandate."

⁴ قَلَدَهُ عَمَلًا "He invested him with an office of administration."

⁵ يَلْحَقُكَ Lit. "Which must attach to thee."

⁶ رَأْيٍ "Advice; counsel": رَأَى رَأْيًا "To form an opinion, to have some advice to give."

mounted and set out with the letter to the place to which he had to go, and when the Governor read the letter, he ordered him to be beheaded. Some days after this, the Khalifah remembered¹ the affair of the Bedouin, and enquired about the minister, and he was told that he had not been seen for some days, but that the Bedouin was present in the city. *Al-Mu'tasim* was astonished at this, and ordered the Bedouin to be summoned, and questioned him about his doings. So he acquainted him with the story of what had befallen him with the *wazir*, from first to last. The Khalifah said, "Didst thou say of me that I had a foul breath?" He answered, "God forbid,² O Prince of the Faithful, how could I say that of which I have no knowledge? That was nothing but trickery and deceit on his part"; and he told him how he had taken him to his house, and gave him garlic to eat, and what he had experienced at his hands. Then *Al-Mu'tasim* said, "God confound envy.³ It begins⁴ with its master and destroys him first." Then he gave a robe of honour to the Bedouin, and appointed⁵ him a *wazir* in his place, while the *wazir* perished⁶ through his envy.

¹ تَذَكَّرَ "To remember" does not take *فِي* after it, so we must either read تَفَكَّرَ "He thought of," or strike out *فِي* before *أَمْر*.

² مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ "I seek God's protection," or "May God preserve me." Some reckon it among the forms of oaths.

³ A form of praise, not blame.

⁴ The past tense here particularizes the instance in this story that proves the rule. The present tense could be substituted.

⁵ اخْتَارَ.

⁶ رَاحَ "To go away"; hence, "To perish."

STORY No. 54.

It is said there was in Al-Madīnah a singing-girl,¹ who was one of the most beautiful in face, and most accomplished in mind, and most cultured, for she had read the Qurʾān, and could quote² poetry, and had studied Arabic. So she was greatly esteemed by Yazīd,³ the son of ʿAbd*ʿl-Malik, and she took possession of the whole of his heart.⁴ One day he said to her, "Hast thou not any relative or anyone whom thou wouldst desire that I should entertain⁵ and show a kindness to?" She answered, "As for relatives I have none, but there are in Al-Madīnah three persons⁶ who were friends of my master, and I should like them to share⁷ some of the good fortune to which I have reached."⁸ So he wrote to his Governor in Al-Madīnah, directing him⁹ to send them to him, and to pay to each of them ten thousand dirhams. And

¹ قَيْنَةٌ, pl. قَيْنَاتُ.

² يَرْوِي, رَوَى "To learn by heart and transmit orally, poetry, etc."

³ Vide note to Story 44.

⁴ مَجْمَعِ pl. of مَجْمَع "The whole of anything."

⁵ أَسَافَ "To lodge and entertain a guest." ضَيْفَ "A guest."

⁶ Vide note to Story 43.

⁷ يَنَالُ, نَالَ: When the subject of this verb is the person himself, it means "To obtain, get"; but when the subject is the thing obtained, and the person is the object, as here, it may be rendered by the passive "It was given."

⁸ مَرَّتْ إِلَيْهِ.

⁹ فِي Lit. "Concerning, about."

when they arrived at the gate of *Yazīd*, the son of '*Abdul-Malik*, admittance was asked for them,¹ so they came in before him, and he treated them with the utmost honour and asked them if they had any requests to prefer. So two of them mentioned what they wanted, and he granted their requests; but the third, when asked what he needed, said, "O Prince of the Faithful, I have no request to make." The *Khalifah* said, "Woe unto thee, and why? Am I not able to do what thou desirest?" He answered "Yes, O Prince of the Faithful, but my request is such that I think thou wilt not grant it." The *Khalifah* said, "Woe unto thee, ask me; for, whatsoever request thou preferest, I will grant." He said, "Dost thou promise me safety, O Prince of the Faithful?" He said, "Yes; I grant thee immunity." Then the man said, "If thou thinkest fit, O Prince of the Faithful, to order thy girl So and So, on whose account thou hast honoured us, to sing for me three times, that I may drink to each song² a measure (*raṭl*) of wine, then do so." The narrator says, At this the face of *Yazīd* changed, and he rose from his seat, and went in unto the damsel and told her. She said, "And what harm is there in that,³ O Prince of the Faithful?" So he ordered the youth to be brought in, and he himself sat on a chair, and the maiden sat on another chair, and the youth sat on a third chair. Then he directed various aromatic plants and many kinds of scent to be brought in, and they were placed: then he ordered three

¹ اسْتَأْذَنَ لَهُمْ "He asked leave for them." This should be either اسْتَأْذَنَ لَهُمُ الْحَاجِبُ "The chamberlain asked leave for them," or اسْتَرْزَدَنَ لَهُمْ "Admittance was asked for them."

² عَلَيْهَا; the pronoun refers to "times" and not to the girl.

³ وَمَا عَلَيْكَ "What harm is there in that?"

measures of wine and they were filled.¹ Then he said to the youth, "Make thy request."² He replied, "Order her to sing, O Prince of the Faithful³—

'I cannot forget⁴ her, though love do more to me than it hath done hitherto.

I call upon my heart to abandon her, and it agrees with me, until I say, 'Is it in earnest?'⁵ when it becomes frightened (and refuses to forget).'"

So she sang.

Then *Yazīd* drank, and the youth drank, and the girl drank, and he said to the youth, "Make thy request." He answered, "Order her, O Prince of the Faithful, to sing—

'On my side (I am for) union, and on your side (you are for) separation, until Time (by death) shall separate us.

I swear by God I will never forget you so long as the full moon shows (in the sky), or the dawn gleams bright.'⁶"

So she sang.

Then *Yazīd* drank, and the youth drank, and the girl drank, and he said to the youth, "Make thy request." He said, "O Prince of the Faithful, order her to sing—

1 ^{سارو رر} "To fill up"; Pass. ^{سارو رر} "To be filled up."

² i.e., "What song do you want?"

³ ^{تأمرها ان تغني فغلت} The Arabic means, though it is not clear, that the youth repeated the lines and afterwards she sang them. These two lines would constitute a whole song or ^{صوت}, which, according to the Arab system, takes some minutes to sing."

⁴ ^{يسلو سلا} "To become free from love; to become happy without it." Inf. n. ^{سلا} (فعل) .

⁵ i.e., "Is it really going to forget her?"

⁶ ^{أفلا} for ^{أفلا} "It gave light, was bright."

¹ She signalled to me by a glance through fear of her people,¹ the glance of a frightened² deer and spoke not.³

And I knew for certain⁴ that her glance said, Welcome, welcome to the enslaved lover.⁵

So she sang.

The damsel had not finished singing when the youth fell prostrate in a swoon,⁶ and *Yazīd* said to her, "Arise and see what ails him." So she arose and roused him, but lo! he was dead. Then *Yazīd* said to her, "Weep for him." She answered, "O Prince of the Faithful, I weep not for him while thou art alive." He said, "Weep for him, for I swear by God that had he lived⁶ he would not have departed without thee."⁷ Then the damsel wept, and the Prince of the Faithful wept sorely. Then he gave orders about the youth, and he was shrouded⁸ and buried, and

¹ خَافَتْ، adv. acc. of cause : from خَافَ.

² مَذْمُورٍ p. p. of ذَمَّرَ "It was frightened": an adj. qualifying ظَلَمَ understood.

³ Read يَتَكَلَّمُ for نَتَكَلَّمُ. "The م takes a *kasrah* by poetical license.

⁴ يَوْقِنُ، أَيْقَنَ "To be positive about": يَقِينُ "conviction; belief."

⁵ خَرَّ مَغْشَى عَلَيْهِ "To fall down prostrate." خَرَّ مَغْشَى عَلَيْهِ Pass.

"He swooned; became senseless" = أُغْمِيَ عَلَيْهِ Pass.

⁶ لَوْ عَاشَ (Past): إِنْ عَاشَ if he live (Fut.).

⁷ i.e., "I would have given thee to him."

⁸ جُهِّزَ "He was prepared for the grave."

as for the girl she remained after him but a few days,¹ and then died.

STORY No. 55.

It is said that *Al-Hasan* bn* l-Fazl* went in unto a certain *Khalifah*, who had with him a great number of learned men. So *Al-Hasan* wished to speak, but the *Khalifah* rebuked him, saying, "Shall a lad speak in this company?" He replied, "O Prince of the Faithful, grant I am a lad, still I am not more insignificant than the hoopoe of Solomon, [nor art thou greater than Solomon, on whom be peace], when it said, 'I have compassed.'² what ye have not compassed.'³ Then he said, "Dost thou not see that God Almighty made Solomon to understand⁴ *the judgment*, and if things went by seniority, David would have been the fitter person."

Note.—Solomon, when a boy, was the means of David's reversing judgment given by him in the case of some injury done by a flock of sheep.

STORY No. 56.

It is said that the hoopoe said to Solomon (upon whom be peace!), "I wish thee to be my guest."⁵ Solomon said to it,

¹ يَمْكُثُ، مَكَثَ "To stop, stay."

² أَحَاطَ (with پ of the thing) "To comprehend, to know a thing in all its circumstances."

³ This refers to the hoopoe's visit to the country of the Queen of Sheba, *Qur'ān*, ch: 27.

⁴ فَهَمَّ "To cause to understand" (with double acc.).

⁵ ضَيْافَةٌ : أَنْ تَكُونَ فِي ضَيْافَتِي "An entertainment."

“I alone?” It answered, “No, but thou and thy army; on such and such an island; on such and such a day.” So Solomon went thither with his army, and the hoopoe mounted into the heavens, and hawked a locust, broke it in pieces and threw it into the sea. Then it said, “O Prophet of God, eat ye; and whosoever fails to get meat,¹ will still have broth.”² Solomon and his army laughed. A poet has put this into verse, thus:—

“Be thou content, for the proverb runs, ‘If meat fails thee, drink soup.’”

STORY NO. 57.

It is told of *Al-Jāhiz*³ that he related: “I went one day to Al-Madīnah and found there a teacher of goodly presence, so I saluted him and he returned my salutation in a very graceful manner⁴ and received me with welcome. So I sat down by him and began to discuss with him the Qurʾān and its different readings,⁵ and found him accomplished in that; Then I began to discuss with him law and syntax and accident and mental sciences,⁶ and the poetry of the Arabs.

¹ فَاتَهُ اللَّحْمُ *Lit.* “The meat was beyond his reach, so that he was unable to get at it.”

² Broth (مَرْقَة) will not get beyond his reach.

³ الجاحظ, so called from having large and prominent eye-balls.

⁴ أَحْسَنَ رَدٍّ *Lit.*, in the best manner of returning.

⁵ There are seven versions or readings of the Qurʾān, based on seven different dialects of the Arabic language.

⁶ عِلْمُ الْمَعْقُولِ “Branches of knowledge founded on reason,” as distinguished from عِلْمُ الْمَنْقُولِ such as grammar, tradition, belles lettres, etc.

and I found him to have a full and scholarly ¹ knowledge of them. Then I said (to myself), 'This, I swear by God, is what strengthens my resolve,' ² and I began to resort unto him ³ and visit him often. So one day I went to visit him, and lo! the school was closed ⁴ and I could not find him. Then I asked about him, and they said, 'Some one belonging to him is dead, ⁵ and he is in grief concerning him.' So I went to his house and knocked at the door, and a girl came out to me and said, 'What dost thou want?' I replied, 'I want So and So.' She went in and came out again and said, 'Enter thou.' I said, 'In the name of God,' ⁶ and went to him, and lo! he was sitting alone. So I said to him, 'May God make great thy reward; ⁷ verily, thou hast a good example in the Apostle of God, (the peace and blessing of God on him). 'Every soul shall taste of death,' ⁸ so be resigned.' Then I added, 'Was the deceased thy son?' He said, 'No.' I said, 'Then thy brother?' He said, 'No.' I said, 'Then what relation was he to thee?' ⁹ He said, 'My

¹ مُحَقِّقٌ "A critical judge."

² *Al-Jāhiz* had written a book on the follies of schoolmasters but afterwards meditated destroying it.

³ اِخْتَلَفَ اِلَيْهِ "To repair time after time to one."

⁴ مَكْتَبٌ = مَكْتَبٌ "A school." مَعْلَقٌ p.p. of عَلَقَ "To close a door with a latch."

⁵ مَاتَ لَهُ مَيِّتٌ. "A dead man of his has died"; this figure of rhetoric is *Majāz Mursal*.

⁶ The Muslim formula before an act; here before entering.

⁷ Said to a mourner: "Be thou patient and God will reward thee."

⁸ Quī'ān, iii. 182.

⁹ مَا هُوَ مِنْكَ.

mistress.' I said to myself, 'This is the first vice of his I have seen.' I then said aloud, 'Glory to God! ¹ women are many, and thou wilt find another' He said, 'Dost thou think that I have seen her?' I said to myself, 'This is another disgrace,' I then said to him, 'How didst thou fall in love with one thou hadst never seen?' He said, 'Know that I was once sitting here and looking out of the window, when I saw a man dressed in a striped garment,² repeating this verse :—

'O *Umm** *Amr*, may God reward thee with good, give me back my heart wherever it may be.'

So I said within myself, 'If this *Umm** *Amr* had not been of remarkable beauty, excelling her peers, she would not have been celebrated in verse,' so I fell in love with her. Then two days after, the very same man passed by, repeating this verse :—

'Verily the ³ has taken away *Umm** *Amr*, and neither she nor the ⁴ has returned.'

So I said, 'Surely she is dead,' and I lamented over her, and sat to receive visits of condolence.⁵

"Then," said *Al Jāhiz*, "I was greatly astonished, and perceived that he was a simpleton,⁶ so I said good-bye to him and went my way."

¹ Here expresses astonishment.

² ^{بدر} "A striped garment of the manufacture of Yemen : ^{دور}
"A rich man."

³ ^{مزمع} "The state or ceremony of mourning, when relations and friends come to console the bereaved."

⁴ ^{مغفل} *Lit.* "Made unmindful," hence, "Simpleton."

STORY No. 58.

*Al-Jāhiz*¹ has said, "No one ever put me to shame² except a woman who came alongside of me³ in the street and said, 'I have a need of thee.'⁴ So I followed her⁵ and she went with me to a goldsmith and said, 'Like this,' and went away. So I remained confounded and questioned the goldsmith and he said, 'This woman wanted me to make for her a figure of the devil,⁶ but I said I did not know what his form is like, so she brought thee to me.'"

It is of *Al-Jāhiz*, too, that the poet says :—

"If the pig⁷ were to be metamorphosed for the second time,⁸ it would be still less ugly than *Al-Jāhiz*."

STORY No. 59.

It is said that a certain glutton alighted at the cell of a monk who brought before him four loaves, and then went to bring for him some lentils. So he took some and brought them, but found that the man had eaten up the bread. So he went and brought him bread, and found⁹ he had eaten up the lentils. He did this ten times. Then the monk asked him, "What

¹ *Al-Jāhiz* was noted for his ugliness.

² *أَخْجَلَ* "To be ashamed": *أَخْجَلَ* causal.

³ *عَرَضَ*, "Side."

⁴ There is a double meaning in these words.

⁵ *Lit.* "I followed in her footsteps."

⁶ With which to frighten her children. The story is here abridged.

⁷ The ancestor of a pig was a man changed into a pig for sin.

⁸ Read *قَرَجَدَ* for *قَرَجَدَ*.

is thy destination?" He replied, "I am going to *Rayy*." He asked him, "With what object?" He answered, "I have heard that there is a skilful physician there, from whom I shall enquire as to what will set right my stomach, as I have little appetite for food." The monk said to him, "I have a request to make of thee." He asked, "And what is that?" He said, "When thou hast arrived,¹ and thy stomach has been set right, come not again to me a second time."

STORY No. 60.

It is related that *Abū Nusās* and *Di'bil* and *Abu'l-'Atāhiyah* were once assembled together in a convivial assembly, and they tarried there three days. And when the fourth day came, they left to repair to their homes. Then exclaimed *Abu'l-'Atāhiyah*, "To whose house shall we go to-day after quitting this assembly?" *Abū Nusās* answered, "You are all men of talent; come, let us exercise our wits upon something in the way of verse, and he who is the most poetical we will go to his place." So while they were talking together, there approached them a maiden² like a unique pearl or a costly jewel, crowned³ with emeralds, girdled⁴ with gold,⁵ arrayed⁶ in jewellery and garments, with not a

¹ *Lit.* "When thou art gone." ذَهَبَ does not mean "left here" but "arrived there."

² فَتَاة fem. of فَتَى. ³ اِكْلِيلٌ : مَكْلَلَةٌ, "Crown, diadem."

⁴ رِشَاقٌ : مَرشَحَةٌ, "Jewelled girdle."

⁵ قَسَدٌ "Gold," or "Precious stones."

⁶ مَحَلَّةٌ p.p. from حَلَّى "To deck a woman with ornaments."

single bad point;¹ and she had on her three mantles of silk,² the outer one white, the middle black, and the underneath red. Then spake *Abū Nuʿīs*, "God be praised, who hath given us this opportunity.³ Let each one of us take as a subject one of her mantles." So *Abu'l-ʿAtāhiyah* recited these verses on the white robe :—

"He appeared⁴ in white silk of *Dabiq*,⁵ with languid⁶ lids and glances. I said to him, 'Thou hast passed and not saluted me, though, with but a salutation from thee, I had been content.

Blessed be He who has clothed thy cheeks with roses;—and thy stature is like the saplings⁷ of the garden.⁸

He answered, 'Yea, God hath clothed me with beauty, and He creates what He lists without hindrance.

My garment like my teeth⁹ and like my neck,¹⁰ is whiteness and whiteness and whiteness.'"¹¹

¹ مبرأة p.p. from أبرأ = أبرأ "To make, or hold, one to be free from fault or blemish."

² Muslim Arab women generally wear two outer cloaks.

³ ففتح لنا بهذا "Who granted (opened) us this."

⁴ بدا "To appear" : تبدى "To appear gradually, advance."

⁵ *Dabiq*, name of a town in Egypt, where the finest linen was manufactured. يافى elliptically for ذي يافى "white; lit. possessor of whiteness."

⁶ مريض, pl. of مريض and مريض "Languid or weak."

⁷ فصح Either a crooked branch, or as here, a sapling straight, lithe and fresh.

⁸ ريفي pl. of ريف "A meadow, garden."

⁹ نغر "The front teeth, or all the teeth; or the mouth; = مبسم

"The place of smiling."

¹⁰ نحر "The uppermost part of the breast or chest, or the place of the necklace."

¹¹ *Colloq.* ابيض بابيض ابيض "All three are white."

Then *Di'bīl* said of the black robe :—

"He appeared to me in black and I said, 'Behold ye ¹ the full moon that has appeared to mankind in the darkness.'

Then said I to him, 'Thou hast passed and not saluted me, and caused the envious and my foes to rejoice at my discomfiture.'²

Blessed be He who hath clothed thy cheeks with roses: may they last for ever without ending.³

He replied, 'Yea, God hath clothed me with beauty, and He createth what he pleaseth without interference.'

'Thy robe like thy hair like my luck, is black and black and black.'

Then *Abū Nu'ās* said of the red robe :—

"There appeared hastening in a vest of red silk ⁴ of China, an enemy to me though styled a friend.

I said with amaze, 'How, is this? Thou hast come in a strange guise.

Has the redness of thy cheeks clothed thee in this, or hast thou dyed it with the blood of hearts?'

He said, 'The sun has presented me with a vest near in hue to the red glow of sunset.

So my robe and wine and the colour of my cheeks are akin and akin and akin.'

By the time they had ended the verses, the damsel was close to them. She said, "The peace be unto you." They said, "And the peace on thee." She said, "I must ⁵ know who you are and what you were doing and what was the upshot." So they told her the story. She said, "I swear by God that *Abū Nu'ās* has excelled." Then she left them and went her way.⁶

¹ اَجْتَلَوْا or اَنْظُرُوا, of which بَدْرًا is the object, is here understood.

² شِمِتَ "To rejoice at an enemy's affliction": اَشْمِتَ "To make the enemies rejoice at any one's affliction."

³ نَقَدَ, inf. n. نَعَادَ, "To pass away and come to an end; to cease."

⁴ لَادَ, pl. of لَادَةٌ "A dress of red China silk."

⁵ لَا بُدَّ "It is absolutely necessary." ⁶ i.e., about her business.

STORY No. 61.

Ash-Sha'bi has related: “‘*Abd*-l-Malik* sent¹ me to the King of the *Rūm*,² and when I came before him and he saw that I answered convincingly,³ he said to me, ‘Dost thou belong to the family of the *Khalifas*?’ I answered, ‘No; but I am an ordinary Arab.’ Then he wrote a letter to ‘*Abd*-l-Malik* and made it over to me, and when ‘*Abd*-l Malik* read it, he said to me, ‘Dost thou know what is in this?’ I said ‘No.’ He said, “Its contents are, ‘I wonder that a nation that have among them a man like this, should entrust their affairs to anyone else.’” Then he added, ‘Knowest thou what he means by this?’ I said, ‘No.’ He said, ‘He envied me for having thee, and wished me to kill thee.’ I answered, ‘O Prince of the Faithful, I have merely⁴ appeared great in his eyes because he has never beheld thee.’ Afterwards when tidings reached the King of the *Rūm* of what ‘*Abd*-l-Malik* had said to *Ash-Sha'bi*, he exclaimed, ‘Well done! He exactly hit what was in my mind’: (*lit.* he did not go beyond what was in my mind).

STORY No. 62.

It is said that *Buḡainah* went in before *Abd*-l-Malik* bn* Marwān*, and he said, “O *Buḡainah*, I see not in thee anything of what *Jamīl*⁵ used to say of thee.” She answered,

¹ *وَجَّهَ* “To send.”

² *الرُّومُ* collective, “The Greeks.”

³ *أَفْعَمَهُ فِي الْجَوَابِ* “An answer that silences.” *جَوَابٌ مُفْعِمٌ*

“He silenced him by his answer”; *فَعَمَ* “Charcoal.”

⁴ *أَمَّا* at the beginning of a sentence, is restrictive (*حَدَرٌ*).

⁵ *Jamīl*, an Arab poet; in love with *Buḡainah*.

"O Prince of the Faithful, he used to regard me¹ with eyes which are not in thy head." He said, "How did he conduct himself in love?" She replied, "It was as he has described in this verse:—

'I swear by him to whom the foreheads² bow low, I know not aught of what is beneath her skirt.

Nor did I ever intend aught to her nor have I winked³ at her; there hath been naught between us save speech and glance.'

STORY No. 63.

Al-Aṣma'ī has related, While I was travelling in the desert I came to a stone on which was written this line:—

"O ye⁴ lovers, in the name of God tell me, when love has alighted upon a youth, how should he act?"

And underneath it I wrote:—

"He must take his love affairs in hand⁵ and conceal his secret, and be humble and submissive in all things."

¹ رَنَّا, رَنُو, inf. n. رَنُو "To gaze; to look continually, without any motion of the eyes."

² جَبَاهُ pl. of جَبْهَة "The forehead."

³ يَقْمِزُ, يَقْمِزُ "To make a sign with the eye, eyebrow, or eyelid."

⁴ Read مَعْرِش for مَعْرِش.

⁵ دَارِي, دَارِي (mostly of persons), "To treat with gentleness, to soothe, cajole." دَارِي مَوْلَا might also mean "He must treat his beloved with gentleness."

I returned the next day, and found written under it this line:—

“How can he manage, when love is the slayer of men,¹ whose hearts are daily being cut into pieces?”²

So I wrote underneath it:—

“When he finds not sufficient control to conceal his secret, naught save death is of use to him.”

So I came back again the third day and found a young man lying³ under that stone, dead, and written on the stone were these lines:—

“We heard and obeyed and then died, so bear my salutation to her who refused union.

May their pleasure be pleasant to those who are happy⁴ but the portion of the miserable lover is always to suffer.”⁵

STORY No. 64.

It is said that the *Banū Hāshim*⁶ gathered one day before *Mu'āwiyah*, and he faced⁷ them and said, “O children of *Hāshim*, my favours⁸ are not withheld from you, and my

¹ *فنى* means a man of parts.

² *قَطَعَ* “To cut” *نَطَعَ* “To cut into pieces.” *تَقَطَّعَ* “To be cut into pieces.”

³ *ملقى* p.p. of *ألقى* “To throw down.”

⁴ *و* here = but or while ; it contrasts two things.

⁵ *نَجَّرَعَ* “To swallow medicine, or anything unpleasant.”

⁶ The Hāshimites, the Family of the Prophet.

⁷ *أَتَبَلَ عَلَى* “To face a person with the purpose of speaking to him ; to accost.”

⁸ *خَيْرٌ* “Benefit, wealth ; bounty or beneficence.”

door remains open to you; neither¹ are my benefits cut off from you, nor is my door shut in your faces.² Yet when I looked into our relations with each other, I beheld something that ought not to be. Ye consider that ye have a stronger claim to what I possess than I have, and so if I gave you a gift sufficient to satisfy your just claims³ ye would say, 'He has given us less than our right, and not treated us as befits our position.' Thus I am like one robbed,⁴ and there is no thanks to him who is robbed (for what is taken from him); and this is in spite of my listening to every petitioner from among you, and helping⁵ every one of you that asks a favour." The narrator continues, "Thereupon *Ibn 'Abbās*, with whom may God be pleased, faced him and said, "I swear by God, thou hast not given⁶ to us until we asked, nor opened to us a door until we knocked at it. Shouldst thou cut off thy bounty from us, the bounty of God is more ample than thine; and shouldst thou shut thy door against us, we shall restrain ourselves from coming to thee. And as for this property, thou hast in it not more than the share that belongs to one single Muslim; and had we had no claim in this

¹ The repetition of the idea is for emphasis.

² ^{وَمِنْ} ^{دُونِكُمْ} "In the way of you; before you."

³ In the early days of Islam, all who could bear arms had a stipend (عَطَاء) from the State. Afterwards this became a sort of favour from the Khalifah.

⁴ ^{مَسْلُوبٌ}, p.p. of ^{سَلَبَ}, "To carry off by force."

⁵ ^{أَسْعَفَهُ} ^{بِحَاجَتِهِ} : ^{إِسْعَافٌ} inf. n. ^{أَسْعَفَ} "He performed for him the object of his want."

⁶ ^{يَمْنَحُ}, ^{مِنْهُ} "To give a thing as a free gift."

property not one of us would have come to visit thee. Is this enough for thee, or shall I say more?" He said, "It is enough for me, O *Ibn 'Abbās*."

STORY No. 65.

It is said that *'Aqīl* 'bn* Abī Ṭālīb*, with whom God be pleased, went in to *Mu'āwiyah* after he (*'Aqīl*) had lost his eyesight, and *Mu'āwiyah* made him sit down upon his couch. Then said he to him, "O ye sons of *Hāshim*, ye are generally afflicted¹ in your eyes." He answered him, "And ye, O sons of *Umayyah*, are afflicted in your minds."² *Mu'āwiyah* was put to shame and gave no reply.³

STORY No. 66.

Al-Ḥasan bn* Sahl* has related, saying, "I was present one day with *Yahya 'bn* Khilid Al-Barmakī*, who was sitting alone⁴ in his room conducting⁵ some business of *Ar-Rashīd's*. So while we were sitting, there came in before

¹ i.e., "You become blind." أَصِيبُ pass. of أَصَابَ "To hit, smite, affect (of disease), etc."

² بَصَرٌ pl. أَبْصَارٌ "Sight, eye": بَصِيرَةٌ pl. بَصَائِرُ "The perceptive faculty of the mind."

³ The point lies in the words *abṣār* and *baṣā'ir*, which come from the same root.

⁴ خَلَا "To be alone"; also, "To confine oneself exclusively to an affair."

⁵ أَحْكَمَ "To do, or execute, a thing well, by the exercise of skill."

us a number of people with petitions,¹ which he granted, and then they went their way. Now the last to rise was *Aḥmad** *bn** *Abī Khālīd*, *Al-Aḥwal* (the "Squint-eyed"). *Yahyā* glanced at him, and then turned to *Al-Fazl*, his son, and said, "My dear son, thy father had an adventure with the father² of this youth. When I have finished this work of mine, remind me and I will tell thee of it." So when he had concluded his work, his son *Al-Fazl* said to him, "May God grant thee honour, my father, thou didst bid me remind thee of the story of *Abū Khālīd*, the "Squint-eyed." He replied, "Yes, my son, when thy father came to *ʿIrāq* in the days of *Al-Mahdī*, he was poor and possessed nothing. My circumstances became so straitened that those who were in my house said, "We have hitherto concealed our position, but our sufferings are now beyond endurance, for to-day it is three days since we have had anything to eat."³ He continued, "Then I wept bitterly at that, my son, and remained perplexed,⁴ absorbed in thought. Then I remembered a kerchief belonging to me, and said to them, "What has become of the kerchief?" They said, "It is here." I replied, "Make it over to me," and I took it and gave it to one of my friends, saying, "Sell it for what it will fetch."⁵ So he sold it for seventeen dirhams and I gave them to my family, saying, "Spend these until God provides others."

¹ اصحاب الحوائج.

² Read أب for أبي.

³ اِقْتَاتَ بِهِ (from قَوَات "food"). "He sustained himself with such a thing; he ate it."

⁴ Read حَيْرَان for حَيْرٍ. The fem. of حَيْرَان is حَيْرِي; it is therefore a diptote.

⁵ تيسر "To be easy of obtainment." It is an Eastern custom to get a friend to sell an article.

The next day I went early¹ to the door of *Abū Khālīd*, the Wazir of *Al-Mahdī*, and found everybody mounted² on their animals, and waiting for him to come out. Then he came out riding; and when he glanced towards me he saluted me and said, "How are you?" I answered, "O *Abū Khālīd*, what is the state of one from whose house a kerchief was sold yesterday for seventeen dirhams?" He looked at me hard and gave me no reply, so I went back to my family down-hearted, and told them what had befallen me with *Abū Khālīd*. They said, "Thou hast done ill, by God, in going to a man who thought thee worthy of some distinguished office, to unveil to him thy secret, and to acquaint him with thy hidden affairs, and so making thyself contemptible³ in his eyes, and lowering thy dignity after thou wert somebody in his eyes; and now after to-day he will regard thee with no other eye than this." I said, "The matter is over now and cannot be recalled."⁴ Then the next day I went early to the *Khalīfah's* door, and when I arrived there a man came to meet me,⁵ saying to me, "Thou wast mentioned just now in the court of the Prince of the Faithful." I paid no attention to what he said, and then there came up to me another man, who said just what the first had said. After that the chamberlain of *Abū Khālīd* came up to me

¹ بَكْرًا and بَكْرَةً : بَكْرًا "Early in the morning."

² وَقُوفٌ pl. of وَقِفٌ.

³ أَرَزَى بِهِ "He lowered him in estimation; made him to be contemned or despised."

⁴ لَا يُمْكِنُ اسْتِدْرَاكُهُ : اسْتَدْرَكَ is "to amend or rectify a mistake."

⁵ اسْتَقْبَلَ, from the same root as أَقْبَلَ "To come."

and said to me, "Where wast thou? for *Abū Khālid* ordered me to keep thee sitting by me until he should come out from the presence of the Prince of the Faithful." So I sat down until he came out, and when he saw me he called me and ordered for me a mount. So I went with him to his house, and when he alighted, he said, "Bring me So and So, and So and So," and they were ushered in. He said, "Did ye not buy from me the crops of *As-Sawād*¹ for eighteen million² dirhams?" They said, "Yes." He said, "Did I not stipulate the partnership of another man with you?" They said,³ "Yes." He said, "This is the man for whose partnership with you I stipulated." Then he said to me, "Rise and go with them." When we had gone out from his presence, the two men said to me, "Enter a mosque with us that we may discuss with thee a matter that will bring thee easy profit."⁴ They said to me, "Thou requirest in this matter agents, and representatives, and measurers,⁵ and assistants. Wouldst thou care to sell to us thy partnership for a sum of money⁷ which we will pay at once, and so thou wilt be benefited thereby and be freed from⁸ trouble and worry?" I said to them, "How

¹ *As-Sawād* (black or dark green) is the name of the country-districts of 'Irāq, as opposed to the towns.

² Read **أَلْفَ أَلْفٍ**: evidently a copyist's error in the text.

³ Read **قَالَ** for **قَالَ**.

⁴ **هَنِيءٌ : رَيْحٌ سَدِيٌّ** "What comes to one without trouble."

⁵ **أَمْسَأُ**, pl. of **أَمْسَأَ**. ⁶ **يَكِيلُ**, from **كَالَ**. "To measure."

⁷ **بِمَالٍ** "For money."

⁸ Abstract nouns require the article: **التعب** is not really definite.

If definite it would be **هذا الأمر** الذي يلحقك في.

much will you pay me ?” They said, “A hundred thousand dirhams.” I said “I will not do it”; so *they* went on increasing and *I* dissenting, till they said, “Three hundred thousand dirhams, and more than this we will not give.” I said, “Wait until I consult¹ *Abū Khālid*. They said, “Thou canst do so.” So I returned to him and told him, and he called the two men and said, “Have ye agreed with him about what he has mentioned?” They said, “Yes.” He said, “Go, and make over the money to him at once.” Then he said to me, “Settle up thy affairs and be ready, for I have invested thee with a post.” So I settled up my affairs, and he invested me with the post he had promised, and I continued rising higher and higher until I attained my present position. Then, said he to his son, *Al-Faḥl*, “My son, what sayest thou with regard to the son of one who hath dealt thus with thy father ? what should be his recompense ?” The son answered, “By my life, I can find no fit reward for him, but that I should resign and give him my post”; and he did so.

STORY No. 67.

It is said that *Hārūn*-r-Raḥīd* went out to see some sight, disguised ; and he found some boys playing, and among them an ugly boy,² feeble of frame, who was sitting, watching their

¹ مَشُورَةٌ and مَشُورَةٌ = اِسْتَشَارَ = يَشَارُ، شَاوَرٌ¹ “To consult with one.”
 “Counsel, advice.”

² فُرْجَةٌ, pl. of فُرْجَةٌ : نَفَرَجٌ “To amuse oneself by viewing a
 فُرْجَةٌ,

³ دَمِيمٌ = قَبِيحٌ “Ugly in aspect: not pleasing to the eyes.” دَمِيمٌ
 relates to the stature ; and دَمِيمٌ, to disposition.

clothes, and turning them over one by one as he repeated the following verses:—

“ Bid thy image¹ turn away from mine eyes at the time of sleep,
So that I may slumber and thus the fire blazing² in my sides may be
extinguished.

As for me, I am as thou hast always known me (i.e., faithful); so, is there
to be any return of thy union?

I am a sorely-sick man³ whom the hands⁴ of his people are turning from
side to side upon a bed of tears.”

The narrator continues, “*Ar-Rashīd* was astonished at what he said, because of his extreme youth, and began to speak kindly with him and converse with him, saying, “Whose is this poetry?” while the boy kept turning from him. Then he confessed that the lines were his. *Ar-Rashīd* could scarcely believe this,⁵ and said to him, “If these lines are really thine, as thou hast asserted, preserve the meaning and change the rhyme.” The boy at once recited in verse:—

“ Bid thy image turn away from my eyeballs at the time of sleep,
In order that I may slumber and the fire blazing in my bones may be
extinguished.

As for me, I am as thou hast known me; so, is there to be continuance⁶ of
thy union?

I am a sorely-sick man whom the hands of his people turn from side to
side upon a bed of sickness.”

Ar-Rashīd was amazed and said, “Thou hast done well! but thou hadst learned this by heart.” He answered, “Try

¹ طيف “A phantom coming in sleep.”

² ترقد² euph. for ترقد² “Burning, blazing.”

³ دنف “Emaciated by disease so as to be at the point of death.”

⁴ روك⁴, pl. of كف “Palm of the hand.”

⁵ Lit. “This appeared too much to *Ar-Rashīd*, too much to believe.”

me." He said, "Change the rhyme and leave the meaning as it is." The boy at once recited, saying :—

" Bid thine image turn away from my eyes at the time of sleep,
That I may slumber and the fire blazing¹ in my heart may be extin-
guished.
I am as thou hast ever known me. Will there be any ending to union
with thee?²
I am a sorely-sick man whom the hands of his people turn from side to
side upon a bed of thorns."³

Ar-Rashīd said, "Tell me; who art thou?" And he took the clothes of the boys and put them over his head and cried, "Cock-a-doodle-do." So *Ar-Rashīd* knew he was the Cock of the *Jinn*.⁴

STORY No. 68.

It is said that King *Bahrām* went out one day to hunt and got separated, and he saw a 'quarry' which he followed up, hoping to overtake it,⁵ until he was a long way from his companions. He saw a herdsman⁶ underneath a tree; he got down from his horse for a call of nature and said to the herdsman, "Take care of my horse for me till I come back."

¹ تَنَاجَجُ euph. for تَنَاجَجُ "To blaze or flame fiercely."

² Said in apprehension. ³ قَتَادُ "A thorny tree."

⁴ دَيْكُ الْجِنِّ "The Cock of the *Jinn*" a celebrated poet; so called, according to the author of *Al-Aghānī*, because he was extremely ugly and had also green eyes.

⁵ لَحِقَ = لَحِقَ "To overtake." طَامِعًا does not mean "eager" here; it means that the quarry was within possible reach and he expected to overtake it. "Eager" would be حَرِيصًا عَلَى.

⁶ رَعَا pl. رَاعٍ.

So the herdsman took hold of¹ the bridle, which was ornamented with a profusion of gold, and catching *Bahrām* off his guard² he took a knife and cut off the end of the bridle. Then *Bahrām* glanced towards him and he was ashamed³ so he lowered his eyes to the ground and prolonged his sitting until the man had taken what he wanted. Then *Bahrām* rose and put his hand on his eyes and said to the herdsman, "Bring me my horse, for some dust has got into my eye through the 'sweepings' of the wind,⁴ and I cannot open it." So he brought it to him and he mounted, and went on till he came to his army. Then he said to the master of his horse, "I have made a present of the end of my bridle, so accuse none of the theft of it."

STORY No. 69.

It is said that *Kisra Anūshirwān* was the most eager of mankind in trying to fathom⁵ mysterious occurrences, and the most diligent of God's creation, in his own age, in investigating strange events. He used to send spies into the country among his people to learn the real state of things and inform

¹ عَمَدَ إِلَى "To take hold of a thing."

² اسْتَنْفَلَهُ "He watched for the moment when he was not looking."

³ اسْتَحْيَى changed from اسْتَحْيَى "To feel shame."

⁴ رِيحٌ سَافِيَةٌ "Dust raised and dispersed by the wind." سَافِي الرِّيحِ
"A wind that raises the dust."

⁵ نَظَّلَ إِلَى Lit. means "He raised his eyes looking for a thing, or towards a thing."

himself of obscure matters, so that he might know the evil-doer and requite him with censure,¹ and reward the doer of good with favour. He used to say that so long as a king neglects to inform himself of such things, he possesses only the name of king, and awe of him vanishes from the hearts of his people. Amongst those who were vigilant over² the affairs of their subjects in administrative measures and in ruling the Realm and State was 'Umar* bn* 'l-Khaṭṭāb, with whom God be pleased. *Mu'āwiyah*, the son of *Abū Sufyān*, followed in his steps in this respect.

STORY No. 70

It is related on the authority of one of the elders of *Al-Madīnah* that he said : 'Abdullah, the son of *Ja'far*, the son of *Abū Ṭālīb*, with whom God be pleased, had a singing-girl named 'Ammārah, and when 'Abdullah went to visit³ *Mu'āwiyah*, he took her with him. So one day *Yazīd*, may God Almighty curse him, came to visit 'Abdullah and spent the day with him, and he brought out the singing-girl to him, and when *Yazīd* beheld her and heard her singing, she fell into his heart, and such love took hold of him that he could not control himself.⁴ He continued concealing his secret until *Mu'āwiyah* died and the Government came to

¹ ^{سَوَّاهُ} أَنْبَ inf. n. from أَنْبَ "To reprove with the utmost severity."

² ^{يَقْظَلُ} "To be vigilant, wide awake."

³ ^{وَقَدَّ عَلَى} "To come to a king, or great man, as envoy ; or to ask aid ; or to pay a visit." وَقَدَّ "Deputation" (mod.).

⁴ *Lit.* "There seized him on her account that which left him no control over himself."

him¹ and he took over the Khalifate.² Then he consulted one of those in whom he could confide, with regard to her. He replied, "The position of 'Abdullah is unassailable,³ and he will never sell her for anything; therefore nothing is of avail⁴ in this affair but stratagem." He said, "Seek then for me one of the men of 'Irāq,⁵ clever, witty⁶ and learned, and possessed of worldly knowledge and intelligence." So they searched for him⁷ and brought him, and when he entered, the Khalifah⁸ questioned him and saw that he had the gift of speech and was pleasant of tongue. Then he said to him, "I have summoned thee for a certain matter; if thou succeedest in it, thou shalt have from me a noble reward"; and he acquainted him with the matter. The man said, "O Prince of the Faithful (he spoke falsely I swear by God, for this evil-doer could never be the Prince of the Faithful), 'Abdullāh' bn* Ja'far is not to be got at except by

¹ أَقْصَى إِلَى "To come to or reach": فَضَاءٌ "Open space, or court of a house."

² تَقَلَّدَ الْخِلَافَةَ "He became invested with the office of Khalifah."

³ رَامَ "To go for a person in fight, etc.; also to attempt a thing." He means to say that 'Abdullah cannot be forced to give up the girl. حِصْنٌ لَا يُرَامُ "An inaccessible or impregnable fortress."

⁴ يَغْنَى, أَغْنَى "To be of avail."

⁵ Men of Irāq were noted for their intelligence.

⁶ قَرِيفٌ "Witty; also, one with social accomplishments."

⁷ The 3 refers to رَجُلٌ, and should be translated "such a man."

⁸ اسْتَنْطَقَ "To lead a person into conversation by questions."

stratagem. No one can accomplish what thou askest except one man, and I hope to be he, by the power and help of God. So aid me with money, O Prince of wrong doers.”¹ The *Khalifah* replied, “Take what thou desirest. So he did so and bought what he needed of Syrian rarities² and of merchandise for trading, and of every good thing. Then he set out for *Al-Madīnah*, and alighted³ by the courtyard⁴ of ‘*Abdullāh*’ *bn** *Ja’far* as close as he could to his dwelling. Afterwards he found means of access to⁵ him and said, “I am a man of ‘*Irāq* and have come with merchandise. I desire to remain in thy neighbourhood and protection,⁶ until I have sold what I have brought.” Thereupon ‘*Abdullah* sent to his stewards⁷ saying, “Honour this neighbour of ours and give him a roomy place to live in.” When the man of ‘*Irāq*

¹ يا اميرالظالمين changed by the compiler of the book from يا امير المؤمنين.

² طُرُق, pl. of طَرَفَة “A pleasing rarity.”

³ اَنَاح, orig. “To make a camel to lie down upon its stomach with its legs folded,” as is done on the occasions of mounting and dismounting. مَنَاح “A place in which camels are made so to lie; a place of alighting”; hence “Climate.”

⁴ عَرَصَة, pl. عَرَصَات and عِرَاص; also, “Open space with buildings around.”

⁵ تَوَسَّلَ إِلَى; also “To supplicate a person.”

⁶ كَنَف prop. “Side of house, etc., especially a covered side,” hence “Protection.”

⁷ قَهْرَمَان pl. of قَهْرَمَان (Pers. origin).

had rested ¹ and had introduced himself, he prepared for 'Abdullah an excellent easy-paced ² mule and some stuffs ³ of 'Irāq, and sent them to him and wrote a letter, saying, "O my lord, I am a merchant, a man of great wealth with which God hath endowed me, and I have sent thee a few choice articles, viz., such and such things, ³ and stuffs ⁴ and perfume, and sent thee a choice mule of comfortable back, and I beseech thee by thy relationship to the Apostle of God, whom God bless and preserve, to accept my present and not wound ⁵ me by refusing it. For I verily am devoted to thee and thy Family, and the most excellent part of my journey is that I should have the pleasure of thy companionship and be honoured with meeting thee." Then 'Abdullah ordered his present to be taken and went out to prayers. On his return he visited the man of 'Irāq ⁶ in his lodgings, who arose and went to him and ⁷ kissed his hands and saluted him; and when 'Abdullah saw his eloquence and elegance of speech, he loved him, and was delighted ⁸ at

¹ اطمأن "He became at ease." اطمأن بالموضع "He settled in the place, and took it as his home."

² فاری "Brisk": of riding animals means "beautiful and easy-paced" as well. عبد فاری "A brisk, active slave."

³ وهو كذا: enumerating them.

⁴ ثياب means both "garments" and the "stuffs from which garments are made."

⁵ أوحى "To make one sad or sorrowful; to make one feel lonely"; opposite of أنسى.

⁶ مر بالعراقي lit., "Passed by him."

⁷ قام الى "To get up and go to meet."

⁸ مر Pass.

his sojourning with him. So the man of 'Irāq continued every day to send gifts and rarities to 'Abdullah; and 'Abdullah said, "May God requite this our guest with good, for he hath filled us with gratitude and rendered us unable to ¹ requite him." And after some time had passed like this,² 'Abdullah invited him and summoned 'Ammārah; and when they had supped and were both in a pleasant state of mind, and the man of 'Irāq had listened to 'Ammārah's singing, he expressed his admiration, and showed his admiration more and more when he saw that it pleased 'Abdullah. Finally 'Abdullah said to him, "Hast thou seen the like of 'Ammārah?" He said, "No, my lord, I swear by God, I have never seen her like, and she is fit only for thee. I thought not that there could be any one like her in the world in beauty and grace." 'Abdullah said, "What is she worth in thine opinion?" He answered, "She has no price but the Khalifate." He said, "Thou sayest this because thou seest what I think of her and in order to cause me pleasure."³ The man said, "By God, O my lord, I like indeed to please thee, but what I have told thee is nothing but sober earnest."⁴ Besides⁵ I am a trading-man

¹ مَعِي and مَعِي (with عَنْ) "He was unable to do the thing."

أَعْيَا "To be fatigued. To fatigue": also "To baffle, disable," with عَنْ not عَلَى; the text is wrong.

² Lit. "And while they two were together like this."

³ Lit. "To bring me pleasure."

⁴ جِدِّ. "Seriousness, earnestness," as opposed to هَزَلٌ.

⁵ وَبَعْدُ. "Besides."

and go on adding dirham to dirham, in search of profit. Yet if she were to be given to me for ten thousand dinars, I would take her." 'Abdullah exclaimed, "For ten thousand dinars?" He replied, "Yes." Now there was at that time no slave-girl worth so much as ten thousand dinars. So 'Abdullah said jestingly, ¹ "Very well, I sell her to thee for ten thousand dinars." The man said, "I take her." He answered, "She is thine." The man said, "The sale is binding," and went away. Next morning 'Abdullah suddenly saw the money arrive. Then he asked, "Has the 'Irāqī sent the money?" They told him, "Yes; ten thousand dinars." He exclaimed, "It is the price of 'Ammārah!" and sent it back, saying, "I was only jesting, and I tell thee that a man like me would never sell a woman like her." The man said "May I become thy sacrifice, but earnest and jest are alike in selling." 'Abdullah said to him, "Woe be unto thee, I know not where there is a damsel worth what thou hast given, and if I had been selling her to anyone, I would have given thee the preference ² over him. But I was only jesting with thee, and would not sell her even for the possession of the whole world, on account of the honour and affection which I have for her." The man of 'Irāq said, "If thou wast jesting I was in earnest and knew ³ not what was in thy heart. So now I am the master of ⁴ the damsel and have sent thee the price. She is now no longer lawful to thee, and take her I must." Then 'Abdullah, seeing his earnestness, said, "Vile is such a guest as this. Verily, we are God's

¹ كَالْمَازِحِ "lit., "like one jesting."

² اَيْتَارُ, inf. n. اَيْتَارُ, اَيْتَارُ ³ اِطَّلَعَ عَلَى. "To know."

⁴ يَمْلِكُ مَلِكٌ "To gain possession of."

and verily to him do we return.”¹ Then he ordered his steward to receive the money and to furnish the maiden with all her attire and perfumes. Thus she was ‘dowered’ to the value of about three thousand dinars. Then he made her over to the steward, saying, “Convey the girl together with all she hath.” Then he said, “This is thine and thou wilt have a return for² what thou hast favoured us with.” So the man of *‘Irāq* took the girl and set out with her. When he had left³ the city behind, he said to her, “O *‘Ammārah*, I swear to thee by God, I do not own thee, nor dost thou belong to me ; nor does one like me buy a maiden for ten thousand dinars, and I am not one who would have dared to come⁴ to *‘Abdullah*, the son of *Ja‘far*, and take for myself one who is the dearest of mankind to him, but I am a secret agent⁵ on the part of the Prince of the Oppressors, *Yazīd* the Vile and Accursed, and thou art his and he sent me in quest of thee. So hide thyself from me ; and if my heart yearns for thee, repulse me.” Then he went on with her until he arrived at Damascus, where there met him men carrying the bier of *Yazīd*, and he had appointed his son, *Mu‘āwiyah*, to succeed to

¹ This formula is especially used at death.

² i.e., I will send later.

³ بَرَزَ “To issue, pass out : or to pass out into the plain or country (بَرَزَ).”

⁴ *Lit.* “I have not come into existence in order to—” : this ج is called *lām‘l’-juḥūd*, and takes the subjunctive : *juḥūd* = “denial” = “I could never do so.”

⁵ دَسِيسٌ “A secret agent” ; from دَسَى “To hide, conceal ; to send one secretly to bring news or information.” دَسِيسَةٌ in Mod. Ar., “A secret machination.”

the Khalifate¹ after him. So the man waited some days and then went in before him with some plausible pretext² and related the story to him. The Khalifah said to him, "She is thine." Thereupon the *'Irāqī* set out, and said to the damsel, "Verily, I said to thee what I did say when I took thee away from *Al-Madīnah* because I did not own thee. But now thou hast become mine, and I call God to witness that I have given thee to *'Abdullāh*³ *bn*⁴ *Ja'far*." So he travelled with her until he arrived at *Al-Madīnah* and he alighted near *'Abdullāh*⁵ *bn*⁶ *Ja'far*, and one of the attendants went in before him and said, "Here hath alighted thy guest from *'Irāq*, who acted with us as he did, God grant him no long life." *'Abdullah* answered, "Stop; ³ receive the man and treat him honourably." Then the man sent into *'Abdullah*, saying, "May I be thy sacrifice! if thou wouldst grant leave for me to come in before thee, I would come in for a short time,⁴ and face to face tell thee⁵ my object and then go." So he gave him leave; and when he came in, he acquainted him with the story, and swore to him by God the Great that he had never seen her face except in his house and—"Here she is present."⁶ Then he brought her into the house and the inmates beholding her cried out to each other,⁷ saying, "*'Ammārah*,

1 ^{اِسْتَخْلَفَ}, "To appoint as successor."

2 ^{نَلَطَفَ بِالْاَدْحُلِ}.

3 ^{مَوْ} or ^{مَوْ} "Desist! abstain! stop!"

4 ^{دَخَلَةً خَفِيفَةً}, *lit.* "A light (i.e., short) visit."

5 ^{شَافَهُ}, inf. n. ^{مُشَافِهَةً}. "He spoke to him, putting his lip

(^{شَفَقَةً}) near to his lip: or mouth to mouth."

6 ^{وَهَا هِيَ...}

7 ^{تَصَابَعُوا} reciprocal.

'*Ammārah*' ; and when she beheld '*Abdullah*, she fell down in a swoon. Then '*Abdullah* began to rub her face with his sleeve, and said, "O my beloved, is this a dream?" The man of '*Irāq* said, "Nay; God hath restored her to thee on account of thy fidelity and nobility of soul." '*Abdullah* said, "God knew all the facts of the case, and to God is the praise in all circumstances." Then he bestowed gifts upon the man of '*Irāq*, and gave him twenty thousand dinars, which he took and went away, full of gratitude.

STORY No. 71.

Al-Aṣma'ī has said, "I went into the presence of *Ar-Rashīd* one day, and he said to me, "Write, O *Aṣma'ī*, this line, though it be on thy trowser-band¹ or the hem of thy robe:—

'Live thou rich, if thou wilt, or poor;² but trouble *must* be in this world.'

He continued, "So I wrote it down." Of him it is also related that he said, "One day while out at noon³ when the sky was flaming and blazing with heat, I met with a black slave-girl coming out of the gate of *Al-Ma'mūn*, and she had with her a silver water-pot filled with water, and she

¹ تَكَّة, pl. تَكَك: i.e., if he had no paper he could write it on his clothes, as Englishmen do on their cuffs.

² أَيْسَرٌ from أَيْسَرٌ, "To become possessed of competence; or of riches and abundance (يُسِر). أَعْسَرٌ from أَعْسَرٌ "To possess little wealth; to become poor." عُسْرٌ "Difficulty; poverty."

³ الْهَاجِرَةُ "Midday in the hot season."

was repeating again and again¹ this line, with a sweet tone and clear enunciation,² saying :—

‘The burning of passion, and the burning of separation, and the burning of the weather!’³

What life can be more bitter than this ?”

He continues : “ I said ‘ O maiden, what is the matter with thee ?’ She answered, ‘ I am a handmaiden of the Prince of the Faithful, *Al-Ma'mūn*, and I am in love with a black slave of his, and he hath forsaken me, and I dare tell no one.’ So I went on and asked leave to enter into *Al-Ma'mūn*. I found him asleep but I was given leave, for he had ordered that I should not be kept away⁴ from him whatever he might be doing.⁵ So I went before him while he was in bed,⁶ and he asked, ‘ What hath brought thee, O *Aṣma'ī*, at this time ?’ I said, ‘ O Prince of the Faithful, wilt thou give⁷ me thy handmaiden, So and So the negress, and thy black slave So and So ?’ He said, ‘ I have done so ; they are thine. Do with them what thou wilt.’ Thereupon I went out from before him and summoned them and brought them together after I had assembled those of the household who were present, and I set them free⁸ and

¹ يردد، يردد “ To say again and again.”

² ذَرَابَةُ لِسَانٍ “ sharpness of tongue ; eloquence ; without impediment ” : being a negress this circumstance is unusual.

³ i.e., she was suffering from all three burnings.

⁴ حَجَبَ “ To refuse admittance to.” ⁵ عَلَى أَيِّ حَالٍ كَانَ

⁶ مَرَّقَدَ, N. of place from قَدَ “ To sleep, lie down.”

⁷ هِبَةً : يَهَبُ، وَهَبَ “ A free gift.”

⁸ اِعْتَقَ = عَتَقَ “ To emancipate a slave ” : اِعْتَقَ = عَتَقَ “ emancipation.”

married the girl to the slave. Then I went back to *Al-Ma'mūn* and said to him, 'O Prince of the Faithful, verily, I have done so and so, and now I wish for something with which to dower them.' So the *Khalifah* ordered ten thousand dirhams to be given to each of them, and ordered the same for me, and I went out from his presence and he back to his sleep."

STORY NO. 72.

'*Umar*' *bn* *Habīb Al-Qāzī*, has related that there was a man in *Al-Baṣrah*, who had a wife and two sons by her, and he died and left them a goat. His wife saw in a dream as though one of her sons were saying, "O mother, dost thou not see this kid,¹ how it exhausts² the milk of this goat? There is no alternative³ but that I should get up and slay it." She answered, "Do not thus, my son." He said, "I *must* slay it," and he got up and slew it⁴ and scalded it⁵ and roasted⁶ it, and took it out of the oven, and sat down along with his brother to eat it. Then his brother said

¹ جَدْيٌ, pl. أَجْدٌ and جَدَاءٌ.

² يَفْنِي, فَنِيَّ "To pass away and come to an end; to become spent or exhausted. Inf. n. أَفْنَى: فَنَاءٌ causal.

³ كَيْسٌ بَدَّ مِنْ أَنْ.

⁴ By printer's error وَذَبَحَهُ is omitted in the text.

⁵ سَمَطَ "To scald off the hair for the purpose of roasting" also colloq., to bathe in very hot water.

⁶ شَوَّى: يَشْوِي شَوًى, "Roasted meat."

something to him that annoyed him. So he took a knife¹ and ripped open his belly. Thereupon she awoke² in alarm, and lo ! her son was saying, "O mother, dost thou see this kid, how it is depriving³ us of the milk of this goat ? I want to get up and kill it." She said "Don't, my son," and began wondering at the verification of her vision. So she took his brother by the hand and put him in a room and shut the door upon him from the inside, and while she was brooding and grieving, she dozed⁴ and beheld the Prophet (upon whom be the blessing and peace of God) in her sleep. And he said to her, "What is the matter with thee ?" She told him the matter. The Prophet called aloud, "O Vision !" and the wall opened and there came out a woman, comely and of surpassing beauty. Then said the Prophet to her, "What hadst thou against⁵ this poor woman ?" She replied, "Nay, I swear by Him who hath sent thee as a Prophet with the Truth, I went not to her in her sleep." Then he called out, "O Confused Dreams !" and another woman came forth inferior in beauty to the first. He said to her, "What hadst thou against this poor woman ?" She said, "I saw that they were well and happy and envied them, and wished to involve them in grief."⁶ Then said the Prophet [to the mother] (God bless and preserve him) "No

¹ السكين i.e., what we call "knife": not def. "the knife."

² يَنْتَبِهْ, اِنْتَبَهَ. "He awoke": نَبَهَ "To rouse from sleep."

³ قَدْ اَفْنَى عَلَيْنَا

⁴ اَعْفَى and اَعْفَى "To sleep a light sleep: to doze off."

⁵ "——to make her so anxious ?"

⁶ اَفْنَمَ: يَغْمُ غَمًّا "To grieve; to cause to be sad or unhappy." اَفْنَمَ "To grieve," *intrans.*

harm shall happen to thee." So she awoke and ate along with her sons and they ceased not to live happily.

STORY No. 73.

A certain man of letters has related, saying, "One of our neighbours told us¹ as follows: *Al-Fazl* passed one hot summer day,² on his way from the city to his house, and I said to him, 'I swear by God I have in my dwelling neither little nor much.' Then *Al-Fazl* sneezed and I said, 'May God have mercy³ on thee.' Now he had previously heard my oath, so he ordered one of his slaves to take me up on his mount, and when he had taken me to his palace he brought out for me five thousand dirhams and ten pieces of stuff. So I departed with them to my home, and my wife said to me, 'Verily, by God, thou didst go forth from us possessing neither little nor much. From whence hast thou stolen this?' He continued: "So I told her the story, but she did not believe⁴ my words; and the neighbours were in doubt⁵ concerning me.⁶ Thus the affair at length reached⁷ the governor, who thought he could

¹ i.e., me and my friends.

² يَوْمٌ صَائِفٌ "A hot day": صَيْفٌ "The summer season."

³ A customary Muslim blessing to one who sneezes.

⁴ مَدَّقَ "To tell the truth": مَدَّقَ "To believe."

⁵ *Lit.* "my state."

⁶ اِسْتَرْابٌ "To doubt, and become infected with suspicion."
رَيْبٌ "doubt, suspicion or evil opinion."

⁷ اِنْتَهَى "To reach": تَنَامَى "To reach by degrees, or through many persons": اَنْهَى الْخَبَرَ "To convey news."

make money out of me, so he imprisoned me. Then said I to him, 'Verily, such and such events happened to me.' So he laid my tale before *Al-Fazl*, who ordered me to be brought, and when I appeared before him and he saw me, he recognised me and directed me to be set free, and bestowed upon me another five thousand, and ten pieces of stuff and said, 'Come to us from time to time¹ and we will show thee favour'; and he ceased not to befriend me until his family met with the fate that befell it."²

STORY No. 74.

A certain man of letters has related that a man had his abode at the canal of *Al-Mahdi*,³ and he was prosperous, but his prosperity came to an end, and he could do nothing to gain a living. Rain fell upon mankind⁴ for three successive⁵ days, and he remained in his dwelling unable to get out. That caused him distress, and hunger came upon him and his family; and towards the end of the night he went to a green-grocer with a trencher⁶ he had, in order to pawn it to him for

¹ يَتَعَهَّدُ، تَعَهَّدَ.

² In text "them," i.e., the family of Barmak, without however mentioning 'family.' As their history is well known, the pronoun "them" is not here incorrect.

³ The name of a *Khalifah*, the third of the 'Abbāsides.

⁴ Note the passive in مَطَرْتَهُمُ السَّمَاءُ : مَطَرُوا "The sky rained upon them"; مَطَرُوا "They were rained upon."

⁵ مُتَتَابِعٌ "Consecutive, successive." تَتَابَعَتِ الْأَمْطَارُ *lit.* "The rains came one after another, i.e., it rained heavily for days."

⁶ قَصَاعَةٌ pl. قِصَاعٌ "A large dish, or platter."

bread. The grocer snubbed ¹ him, saying, "What can I do with it?" and refused to give him anything on it. The narrator continues: "So he returned home, sad and at a loss. Then he raised his hand towards heaven and said, 'O God, send to me this night a slave whom thou lovest,² to free me from my present distress.'³ Then before he knew aught⁴ there was a knock at the door, and he went out and beheld a man on an ass, surrounded by servants.⁵ He said to him, 'How many are thy family?' He said, 'So many.' Thereupon the man gave him a purse estimated by the receiver to contain five thousand dirhams. He exclaimed, 'Praise be to God, who hath answered my prayer and freed me from my sorrow!' The man said to him, 'What was thy prayer?' So he told him the story of how the grain-dealer had dealt with him, and how he had petitioned God the Mighty and Glorious. Then he asked him to swear that he had made this prayer, and he swore to him. Then he ordered him to be given a hundred thousand dirhams." He continued: "So I questioned one of those servants about him, in order that I might know whether the man could do what he had ordered for me or not. He answered, 'He is *Al-Faḥl*, the son of *Yahyā*, the son of *Khālīd Al-Barmakī*'; so I was silent at that, and went away into my house, and when morning came I went to his steward and received from him the money."

¹ *إنتهر* "To address one with rough speech."

² i.e., a charitable man.

³ *مَا أَنَا فِيهِ*, lit. "what I am now in."

⁴ i.e., directly after.

⁵ *حَفَّ*: *قَدَحَفَّ بِهِ خَدَمٌ* pl. of *خَادِمٌ* "A servant": *حَفَّ*. "To go round about, surround."

I say,¹ verily, *Al-Fazl* is worthy of² the saying of *Abū Tammām*, on whom God have mercy:—³

“He is a sea, and from whatever side thou approachest him, his depths⁴ are generosity and his shore is liberality.

So generous is he, that when thou goest seeking his bounty, he giveth⁵ thee whatsoever his fingers contain.

And if he have naught in his hand save his soul, that he giveth freely, so let him that petitions him be in fear⁶ of God.”

STORY No. 75.

It is said that a certain man of Syria made up his mind to go and visit⁷ *Al-Ma'mūn*, so he consulted one of⁸ his friends, saying, “In what way is it fitting for me⁹ to meet the Prince of the Faithful?” He answered, “With¹⁰ eloquence.” He replied, “I have none of it, and I commit many solecisms in my speech.”¹¹ The man answered, “Use thou the

¹ The writer. ² حَرِي ب “Worthy of.”

³ — رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ contraction of رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ.

⁴ لَحْدَةٌ “The depths of the sea.”

⁵ حَبَاءٌ : يَحْبُو. “To give a thing without any compensation.”

“A gift.”

⁶ تَقْوَى : يَتَّقِي, إِنْفَى. “Piety, fear of God.” Because the giver would even give away his soul.

⁷ لَقَاءٌ, يَلْقَى, لَقِيَ. inf. n. “To meet; to visit.”

⁸ Printer's error for بعض اصحابه as in original edition.

⁹ أَعْلَى not عَلَى أَبِي وَجْهٍ أَمْلَمٌ.

¹⁰ State is always expressed by the prep عَلَى.

¹¹ يَلْحَنُ, لَحْنٌ. “To make grammatical mistakes in reading or speaking.”

nominative case, for that is most in use." So he went in before *Al-Ma'mūn* and said, "Peace be upon thee and the mercy of God and His blessing." The *Khalifah* said, "Slap the back of his neck,¹ O slave"; so he slapped him. He exclaimed, "In the name of God!" The *Khalifah* said, "Woe be unto thee! who has moulded² thee in the mould of the nominative?" He replied, "How, O Prince of the Faithful, can I avoid nominating him who has been nominated by God?" The *Khalifah* laughed and fulfilled his request.

Note.—The point of this story is that the man acts on his friend's advice, and *mis*-uses the nominative case-ending throughout.

STORY No. 76.

It is said: Two men disputed before 'Umar, the son of 'Abd*-'l-'Azīz, on whom God have mercy, and kept³ making grammatical mistakes. The chamberlain said, "Arise, for ye have annoyed⁴ the Prince of the Faithful." 'Umar said, "I swear by God, thou art a severer annoyance to me than they are."⁵

STORY No. 77.

It is said that when 'Abd*-'l-Malik, the son of *Marwān*, was engaged in fighting⁶ with *Muṣ'ab*, the son of *Az-Zubayr*,

¹ بَصَقَ مَقَعَ. ² مَبَّ "To pour the molten metal into a mould."

³ Read جَعَلَ for جَعَلَ. ⁴ أَذَى : بُرِّذِي أَذَى. ⁵ أَذَى.

⁶ The chamberlain himself was as great a sinner in this respect as the two men: for قُرِمَا he says قُرِمَا.

⁶ قَتَلَ inf. n. of قَتَلَ.

the nobles¹ of the Greeks assembled before their king and said, "Chance has given thee power over² the Arabs, for they are occupied one with another, and their might is being spent among themselves; so the proper course is that thou shouldst attack³ them in their country, for thou wilt abase⁴ them and work thy will on them." He objected to this, but they declined everything but that he should do so (strongly insisted on it). When he saw this he sent for two dogs and set them at each other,⁵ and they fought fiercely together. Then he had a wolf brought and set it loose⁶ between them, and when the dogs saw the wolf they abandoned what they were engaged in and attacked the wolf until they killed it. Then the King of the Greeks said, "Such is the way of the Arabs. They fight against each other, but when they see us, they, being collected together as they are, will leave their fighting and will attack us."⁷ Then they

¹ ^{نُجَبَا} ^{أَعْيَان} ^{عَيْن} = ^{وَجْه} ^{وَجْه}, pl. ^{أَعْيَان} "Nobles, principal personages."

² So also ^{أَمَكَّنَهُ} ^{الْفُرْصَةَ} "The game came within shot."

"He got an opportunity."

³ ^{يَغْزُو} ^{فَزَا} "To war with an enemy in his own country."

⁴ ^{أَذَلَّ} ^{trans.} "To abase or humble" : ^{ذَلَّ} "To be, or become abased, humble and weak."

⁵ ^{حَرَّشَ} ^{بَيْنَهُمَا} "He excited strife between them, provoking the one against the other" : said of men, dogs, beasts, etc.

⁶ ^{خَلَّاهُ} ^{وَفَلَّاهُ} : ^{بِخَلِّي} ^{خَلَّى} "He left him to do as he pleased with such a one."

⁷ Read ^{يَقْتُلُون} ^{بِقَتْلِهِمْ} for ^{يَقْتُلُون}. For ^{بَيْنَهُمَا} it is better to say ^{فِيهِمَا}

acknowledged the truth of what he said and desisted from their intention. ¹

STORY No. 78.

It is said a number of his retinue and servants appeared before *Al-Manṣūr*, and he noticed among them a man wearing an old *sawād*, ² so he said to him, "O So and So ! how is it that I see thy *sawād* all tattered ? Dost thou not receive thy stipend ?" He said, "I do, O Prince of the Faithful, but my father has died and left behind him large debts, so I sold his inheritance to pay off his debt and have diverted most of my stipend to his wife ³ and his surviving children." ⁴ The *Khalifah* said, "Repeat to me what thou didst say" ; so he repeated it, and he said, "Well hast thou acted ! Come to me early to-morrow." So he went to him in the early morning and found *Ar-Rabī* ⁵ seated on a chair, and he said to him, "The Prince of the Faithful hath enquired after thee, so go in unto him." Then he went in and found him praying, and when he had finished his prayers, he said, "Did I not order thee to come early ?" He answered, "O Prince of the Faithful ! I have not, as I thought, failed in coming early." ⁶ The *Khalifah* said, "Take what is

رجعوا عما كانوا عليه ¹

² سواد "A black garment worn as a mark of distinction by the 'Abbāsid *Khalifahs* and their followers."

³ حرمه "A wife," as being entitled to protection or defence.

⁴ من بعده "surviving." ⁵ The *Khalifah's* chamberlain.

⁶ يذهب inf. n. of ذهب "To go early in the morning."

under this cotton quilt.”¹ Then I noticed on one side of the room a lamp burning and a small couch, on which he slept. So I lifted the quilt, and lo ! under it were gold coins, and I began scooping² them up into my sleeve. Then I blessed him and went out and weighed the dinars, and found them to be one thousand and ninety-nine.

STORY No. 79.

It is said that *Shimr*, the son of *Ifriqīs*, the son of *Abrahah*, went out towards the country of China at the head of five hundred thousand warriors,³ and when he approached their⁴ country, tidings of this reached the king of China, so he assembled his ministers, and took counsel with them. The chief of them said, “Make a mutilating mark⁵ upon me and leave me to my own devices.” Then the king gave orders and his nose was cut off,⁶ and he arose and fled towards *Shimr*, whom he met four stages after leaving the confines⁷ of China. Then he went in before him and said

¹ مَضْرُوبَةٌ “A cushion; a bed cover of quilted stuff.”

² يَحْفَرُ حَفًّا, prop. “To take earth with the hand and throw it somewhere (in an open grave, etc.).”

³ مُقَاتِلٌ “A combatant.”

⁴ “Their,” i.e., the Chinese.

⁵ أَثَرٌ فِيهِ “He left a mark upon him.”

⁶ جَدَعَ “To mutilate by cutting off the nose, or the ear, or the like.”

⁷ مَغَارٍ pl. of مَغَارٌ “A place of entrance.”

"I have come to take refuge¹ with thee." *Shimr* asked, "From whom?" He said, "From the king of China, for I was one of his chief ministers,² and he gathered us together when tidings of thy coming reached him and took counsel from us. Then all of them advised him to fight with thee, but I opposed³ their opinion, and counselled him to render fealty to thee and pay thee tribute. So he accused⁴ me, saying, 'You favour the side of the King of the Arabs,' and he did to me what thou seest, and I feared⁵ that in addition to this he would kill me, so I left and fled to thee." Then *Shimr* was delighted with him and caused him to alight in his own place, and promised him kindly treatment. And when morning came and he wished to march, he said to that man, "How is thy knowledge of the road?" He said, "I am one of those who know it best." The king said, "How far are we from water?" He said, "Three days' journey, and I will bring thee to water on the fourth day." Then the king ordered his troops to march and proclaimed among them that they should only carry water for three days. After that he set out along with his army, the man (riding) ahead of him. When the fourth day came their water was exhausted and the heat was severe. The man said, "There is no water, and what I have done

¹ مَسْتَجِيرًا "Seeking protection."

² خَاصَّةٌ : مِنْ خَاصَّةٍ وَزَرَائِهِ pl. of خَاصٌّ.

³ خَالَفَهُ contr. of اِفْتَقَدَهُ, "He disagreed with, or differed from, him."

⁴ اَلْتَمَّ and اَلْتَمَّ "To accuse one of a thing, generally falsely; suspect him of it; impute it to him."

⁵ لَمْ أَمْسَ "I am not free from fear."

is only an artifice on my part that I might, by sacrificing myself, keep thee away from my king." Then the king ordered him to be beheaded, and the whole people thirsted. Now the astrologers had predicted of *Shimr* at the time of his birth that he should die between two mountains of iron. He had placed his cuirass under his feet owing to the intense heat of the ground,¹ and had put an iron shield² over his head for the great heat. Then he remembered³ what had been predicted of him at his birth, and he said to his people, "Leave me and go wheresoever ye please ; I have brought you to this destruction." Thus he perished and all who were with him.

STORY No. 80.

It is said that *Shabīb*, the son of *Yazīd*, the *Khārijī*,⁴ passed by a boy, who was bathing⁵ in the water of the Euphrates, and he said to him, "Boy, come out to me that I may question thee." The boy recognised him and said, "I am afraid. Am I secure if I come out, until I put on my clothes?" He said, "Yes." So the boy came out and said, "I swear by God, I will not put them on to-day." Then

¹ الرَّمْضَاءُ "Ground heated by the sun." From the same root comes رَمَضَانُ, the ninth of the Arabian months.

² نُرْسُ "A shield," pl. نَرَسَةٌ and أَثَرَسٌ.

³ يَذْكُرُ, ذَكَرَ "To remember ; also, to mention."

⁴ The *Khārijīs* (or *Khawārij*, Revolters) were a sect of Schismatics. A *Khārijī* would kill anyone refusing to embrace his tenets.

⁵ لَقَعَ "To go down a well, or into a river, and bathe" : لَقَعَ "To soak in water."

Shabīb laughed and said, "By the Lord of the *Ka'bah*, he hath outwitted me," and he appointed one of his companions for him to guard him lest any of his followers should injure him in any way.¹

STORY No. 81.

Al-Bayhaqī has mentioned in his book "Deeds Good and Evil," that a man from Syria asked *Ibn 'Abbās* (with whom God be pleased), "Who are the promise-breakers?"² He said, "Those who swore fealty³ to 'Alī at *al-Madīnah*, and then broke their oath and so he ('Alī) fought with them at *Baṣrah*, I mean the companions of the camel.⁴ The deviators from the way⁵ are *Mu'āwiyah* and his party, and the apostates⁶ are the people of *an-Nahrawān*⁷ and those who were with them." Then said the Syrian, "O *Ibn 'Abbās*, thou hast filled my breast with light and knowledge and hast dispelled

¹ أَصَابَهُ بِمَكْرُورٍ "He did to him an abominable, or evil thing."

² الْفَائِضُونَ, from نَكَثَ "To violate or break a covenant or compact," orig. "To untwist a rope."

³ بَاعَ "To swear allegiance to": بُويعَ بِالْخِلَافَةِ "He was acknowledged as *Khalifah*."

⁴ i.e., the opponents of 'Alī, at the 'Battle of the Camel'; so called from the fact that *Asishah* was riding on a camel during the battle.

⁵ Ref. to *Qur.* lxxii. 15: "Those who swerve from righteousness shall be fuel for hell." قَسَطَ "To deviate from the right course."

⁶ مَرَقَ, orig. "To pass through and come out on the other side (of an arrow)."

⁷ Name of a river where a battle was fought.

my doubts, so may God ever give thee relief. ¹ I testify that 'Alī, upon whom be peace, is my lord, and the lord of every believing man and of every believing woman."

STORY No. 82.

Ibn'l-Makkī has related of his father that he said, "Muḥammad Al-Amīn said to me near the end of his life, 'O Makkī, verily I desire, by God, to hold a party one day before something intervenes ² between me and my kingdom.' I said, 'Do so, O Prince of the Faithful.' So he said, 'Come early to me on the morrow.'" He continues: "Then I departed. Next day at dawn his messenger came to me, so I went to him ³ (the Khalifah) and found him in the courtyard of his house wearing a mantle of embroidery ⁴ glittering ⁵ with gold braid, and a turban to match, the likes of which I had never seen before on anyone; and beneath him a chair of gold, bedecked with jewels. Then he called for a chair for me and I sat down on it, on his left hand. After this he said to a servant in attendance, ⁶

¹ فَرَجَ عَنْكَ (the object فَمَكَ being suppressed, but understood)
 "May God remove from thee thy grief."

² يَحُولُ , حَالٌ "To intervene as an obstacle," i.e., "before my kingdom is taken from me (*not* by death). The Pass. expresses some mishap. The Khalifah was at that time at war with his brother Al-Ma'mūn.

³ No ambiguity in the pronoun in Arabic as it naturally refers to the principal subject.

⁴ وَشِي .

⁵ يَأْتَلِقُ , يَأْتَلِقُ (from أَلَقَ) "To shine, glitter."

⁶ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ , lit. "standing at the back of his head."

'Summon to me Such and Such a damsel and Such and Such a one,' until he had enumerated four girls, each of whom I knew to have skill and execution¹ in singing. So they came forth and sat on his right. Then he said, 'Boy, bring me a measure of wine'; and a measure was brought to him, and a goblet of crystal, incrustated with jewels. He then turned to her who was next him² and said to her, 'Sing for us.' And she struck up a sweet air and sung the lines of *Walīd*, the son of '*Uqbah*, the son of *Abū Mu'ayt* :—

'They themselves killed him in order to usurp his place, just as his satraps³ killed *Kīra* by night.

O sons of *Hāshim*, give back the arms of your brother, and rob him not : to rob is unlawful.⁴''

He continued, "So the *Khalifah* cast down the goblet in the midst of the courtyard.⁵ Then he said, 'May God curse thee ! What is this ?' She said, 'O ! my master, I swear to thee by God, nothing but this came on my tongue.' Then he turned to the boy and said to him, 'Give me to drink.' So he brought him a cup like the first. The *Khalifah* then

¹ *حَدَقَ* might mean "critical knowledge," but *جَوْدَةٌ* means, "a good performance."

² *يَلِيّ، وَلِيّ، وَدَلِيّ* "To be near, quite close to"; with acc. of the person or thing.

³ *مَرَزَبُ* or *مَرَزَابَة* pl. of *مَرَزَبَان* P. "A satrap, or chief of the Persians."

⁴ *Al-Walīd*, uterine brother to '*Uṣmān*, composed these lines on the murder of the latter. The arms of '*Uṣmān* were seized by '*Alī*, who was a *Hāshimite*.

⁵ *مَسَطَ الدَّارَ*, which naturally would be the centre of the courtyard.

said to the second, 'Sing'; and she sung the lines spoken about *Kulayb*, the son of *Wāsil* :—

'By my faith I swear, *Kulayb* had more helpers than thou and his crime was less than thine, yet he became besmeared ¹ with his own blood.'

Then the *Khalifah* threw down the goblet from his hand in the courtyard of the palace and broke it. Then he said, 'O boy, bring me a measure.' After this he said to the third, 'Sing,' and she sang :—

'Dost thou (O thou of unknown father) ² kill *ʿAmr* and flee away, and imagine that thou shalt escape after killing him ?

If thou flee'st to the remotest regions, thou shall not escape my blow. How canst thou escape ³ death ⁴ when blood is seeking thee ?''

He continued, "Then the *Khalifah* cast the goblet at her, and said, 'O ! boy, bring me a measure.' Then he said to the fourth, 'Sing,' and she sang :—

'As though there had never been a human being between *Al-Hajūn* and *Aṣ-Ṣafa*, and no one had e'er told stories in *Makkah* by night! ⁵

Yet we were its people, but the calamities of the nights and events that are a warning ⁶ destroyed ⁷ us.'"

¹ فَرَجَ pass. of فَرَجَ "To smear a garment with blood, or with something red or yellow."

² لَا أَبَاكَ ; it may also mean, "May you have no father," i.e., may your father die.

³ يَفْرُتْ , فَاتَ "To escape ; become beyond reach."

⁴ حَيْنَ "Death ; time of death." حَيْنَ "Time."

⁵ *Al-Hajūn* and *Aṣ-Ṣafa* are two hills close to Mecca. These verses were said by a prince of Jurhum when the tribe was driven out of Mecca by *Khuzā'ah*.

⁶ الْخَطُوبُ الزَّوْجَرُ "Restraining, terrifying events that are a warning to others." In another version "وَالْجُدُودُ الْعَوَائِرُ," evil fortunes.

⁷ يَبِيدُ , أَبَادَ "To perish." يَبِيدُ , أَبَادَ "To destroy" : يَبِيدُ "A desert."

The narrator continues, "He then turned to me and said, 'Thou hast heard : this is something that God the Great and Glorious wills.' " The narrator continues, "Not many days passed before I beheld his head suspended on his palace wall."

STORY No. 83.

It is told of *Al-Auzā'i*, that he said "*Al-Manṣūr* sent to me, saying, 'Why hast thou kept away from us¹ so long? I replied, 'And what dost thou want with us?' He said, 'To learn something² from you.' I said to him, 'Listen, I pray; '*Urwah*, the son of *Ruwaym*, hath told me that the Apostle of God (on whom be the blessing and peace of God), said, 'He to whom a warning³ comes from his Lord and he accepts it, God will reward⁴ him for it; but he who receives a warning and does not accept it, it will be evidence against him at the day of resurrection.' Listen! it becometh not the like of thee to sleep, for prophets have been appointed shepherds on account of their knowledge of the flock; they repair the broken, and fatten the lean,⁵ and bring back the strayed. How is it then with one who sheds the blood of the believers and seizes their property? I pray

¹ أَبْطَأَ مِنْ, "To delay from."

² اسْتَفَادَ مِنْهُ, *He derived benefit from him* "; فَائِدَةٌ being understood.

³ مَوْعِظَةً, "either in words or otherwise."

⁴ يُكَفِّرُ on the part of God signifies "The recompensing, or rewarding, a man."

⁵ هَزَالٌ "Thin, emaciated" : هَزَالٌ "emaciation."

God to preserve thee ¹ from saying that thy kinship to the Apostle of God will in itself call thee to Paradise. Verily, the Apostle of God had in his hand a strip of palm ² which he was using as a tooth-stick, ³ and he struck with it the head ⁴ of a desert Arab. Then Gabriel (on whom be peace) came down to him and said, 'O Muḥammad! God the Blessed and the Almighty hath not sent thee to be an oppressor, a causer of despondency and despair of the mercy of God, ⁵ breaking the heads of thy people. Cast away the palm stick from thy hand.' Then the Prophet asked the Arab to retaliate upon him. So how shall it be with one who sheds the blood of the Muslims? Verily, God the Great and Glorious hath sent an inspiration to one better than thee, to wit, David (on whom be peace!), saying, 'O! David, we have made thee a prince upon the earth; therefore judge thou between men with justice. ⁶ And know thou that a single garment of the men of fire if it were suspended between the heaven and the earth, the people of the earth would perish from the foulness ⁷ of its odour: how then will it be with him who wears ⁸

¹ ^{أُعِيذُكَ بِاللَّهِ}, *lit.* "I charm thee by invoking God against such an evil."

² ^{جَرِيدَةٍ}, orig. "A palm-branch stripped of its leaves."

³ ^{سَوَاكُ}, ^{إِسْتَاكَ} "He rubbed and cleaned his teeth with the ^{سَوَاكُ} or ^{مِسْوَاكُ} (i.e. a tooth-stick)".

⁴ ^{قَرْنٌ} "Side, or crown, of the head; a lock of hair."

⁵ ^{أَقْنَطَ} from ^{أَيْسَ} and ^{مَوْ بِسًا مَقْنَطًا} "To make to despair."

⁶ Qur., xxxviii. 25. ⁷ ^{نَجَسٌ} "Stink."

⁸ ^{تَقْبِصَ} "He clad himself with a ^{قَمِيصٌ} or shirt."

it? Moreover, if a ring of the chains of hell were placed on the mountains of the world, they would melt away like lead, until they flowed down to the seventh earth: how then will it be with him who wears it on his neck?"¹

STORY No. 84.

A certain man of letters has said, "I went in one day to visit *Ab*-l-'Ashā'ir* in his sickness, and said, 'What ails the Amīr?' He pointed to a slave boy standing before him—it was as though *Rizwān*³ had been unwatchful of him and he had escaped from Paradise. He then recited:—

'This boy has made my body sick with the sickness that is in his eyes. The languidness⁴ of his disdainful eyes hath given languidness to my bones.

His spirit hath blended with mine, like the blending of water with wine.'

STORY No. 85.

A certain man of letters has said: "*Yahyā*, the son of *Khālīd Al-Barmakī*, sent one day for his son *Ibrāhīm* (who used to be called the "Gold Piece of the family of *Barmak*" on account of his beauty and good appearance),⁵ and also summoned his tutor and those of his scribes and companions whom he (the father) had associated with⁶ him.

¹ نَقَلَدَ, orig. "He put on his neck a قَلَادَة or necklace."

² رَجَدَ "To find; feel."

³ *Rizwān*, name of the keeper or guardian of Paradise.

⁴ مِنْ دَلَالٍ, i.e., "that has its origin in pride of beauty."

⁵ The root-meaning of جَمَال is "fat"; hence it means "plumpness and well-being."

⁶ يَضُمُّ نَحْمَ إِلَى "To join one to another."

Then he said, 'What is the state of this son of mine?' They said, 'He has reached such and such a point in his studies.'¹ He said, 'I did not enquire about that, I enquired about the height of his aspirations.'² They said, 'We have bought for him such and such estates.' He said, 'It was not of that I enquired, but of the height of his aspirations. Have ye placed men under obligations to him,³ and endeared him to the people?' They said, 'No.' He said, 'Then ye are bad companions for him, for he is, I swear by God, more in need⁴ of this than of the things ye mention.' Then he ordered five hundred thousand dirhams to be given to him and these were distributed to unknown people."—And excellent is he who has said :—

"Generous deeds refuse to be separated from the generous,⁵ and the generous man can never be a miser."

STORY No. 86.

It is said that *Al-Ma'mūn* discoursed one day, and he excelled himself. So *Yahyā*, the son of *Aktam*, said, "O Prince of the Faithful (may God make me thy sacrifice), if we discuss deeply⁶ on medicine, thou art *Jālīnūs* (Galen) as to his knowledge of it; or on astronomy, thou art *Hirmis* in his⁷ calculations; or

¹ مِنْ الْأَدَبِ : a general term for learning.

² بَعْدُ الْهَيْمَةِ "High spirit : high aspirations."

³ مَنَنْ, pl. of مَنَّة "Obligation, favour." *Lit.* "Have ye placed for him obligations on the necks of men?"

⁴ أَخْوَجَ. ⁵ i.e., "The generous must ever be generous."

⁶ خَافَى, بِخَوْضٍ, orig. "To wade through water"; hence, "wade into or plunge into a discourse."

⁷ The pronouns refer to the *persons* throughout.

on jurisprudence, thou art *‘Alī*, the son of *Abū-Ṭālīb* (upon whom be peace), as to his knowledge; or if liberality be mentioned thou art *Hātim* as to his munificence; or if truth speaking (be mentioned) thou art *Abū-Zarr* in his truthfulness of speech; or if generosity, thou art *Ka‘b* in his unselfishness; or fidelity in promise, thou art *As-Samau‘al*, the son of *‘Adiyā*, in his fidelity.” The *Khalifah* approved his speech, and his face beamed.¹ Now *Al-Ma‘mūn* was skilled in all sciences, and had discovered all (nature’s) mysteries.

STORY No. 87.

Abū-‘Abdillāh Aḥmad, the son of *Abū-Dā‘ūd*, has said, “*Al-Ma‘mūn* used to disbelieve in ² dreams and say that they were nothing, and that if they were really true we should see them verified in actual life, and no part of them would fail; but, since we see that only a fraction or two ³ of the whole comes true, we conclude that they are unreal and that most of them do not come true. Now he had sent his son, *‘Abbās*, to the country of the Greeks, and tidings of him were slow in coming. One day he performed the morning prayers and slept a little; then he awoke and called for his riding animal and mounted, saying, ‘I will inform you of a wonderful thing. I saw just now as it were an old man, grey headed and grey bearded, having on a fur coat ⁴ and a bag ⁴ round his

¹ تَهَلَّلَ “To shine brightly; to have a smiling face, to rejoice.”

² أَبْطَلَ “To declare to be بَاطِلٌ, i.e., false, untrue, unreal, or of no account.”

³ حَرْفٌ *lit.* “Letter or word.”

⁴ فُرَّةٌ, pl. فُرَّاءُ “A furred garment.” كَسَاءٌ means “a garment” ; but also, as here, “a bag.”

neck, and with him a stick, and there was a letter in his hand, and he drew near to me, just as I had mounted, and I said, 'Who art thou?' He said, 'The messenger of 'Abbās; he is safe,' and¹ he then handed me his letter. *Al-Mu'taṣim* exclaimed, 'I pray to God that the dream of the Prince of the Faithful may come true, and may He send him tidings of his son's safety.' The narrator continues: "Then he rode on,² and I swear by God he had only gone forth a short distance, when an old man came towards him just as he had described.³ *Al-Ma'mūn* said, 'This, by God, is the very man that I saw in my dream, and such was his appearance.' Then the man approached, and the servants pushed him aside⁴ and cried out to him, but *Al-Ma'mūn* said, 'Let him be.' So the old man came, and he asked him, 'Who art thou?' He said, 'The messenger of 'Abbās and this is his letter.'" The narrator continues: "We were amazed and wondered much, and I exclaimed, 'O Prince of the Faithful, dost thou belittle dreams after this?' He said, 'No.'"

STORY No. 88.

Yūsuf, the son of *Sallām Az-Za'farānī*, has said, My father related to me, saying: " *Khālīd*, the son of *Barmak*, one day, when he was at *Rayy* and on the point of starting for a

¹ The و is by error omitted in the text.

² نَهَضَ إِلَى : يَنْهَضُ "To rise from a place; to quit a place": نَهَضَ الْعَدُوُّ "He (rose and) sped towards the enemy."

³ *Lit.* "in just that state."

⁴ نَحَى : يَنْحِي "To push aside, send away from": "Aside."

country seat of his¹ after he had brought out his stable² and while we were standing before him, spoke, saying, 'Who will go with these beasts?'³ My father⁴ replied, 'I,' and no one dared to speak. He said, 'Go with them.' So I (continued my father)⁵ went out with them, and I took good care of them. Then when I brought them back, he approved the result of my care.⁶ I said, 'O Prince, I have a request to make.' He said 'What is thy request?' I said, 'My mother is a slave to some people in *Basrah*, and my request is that the Prince should buy her.' He said, 'What is her price?' I answered, 'Her price is three thousand dirhams.' He exclaimed, 'Give him three thousand dirhams,' and said to me, 'Purchase thy mother and set her free.' Then again he said, 'What else dost thou desire?' I said, 'The pilgrimage, and that my mother should perform it along with me.' He said, 'Give him three thousand dirhams.' I said, 'We require a servant to wait upon us.' He said, 'Give him three thousand dirhams for the cost of a servant.' I said 'We require the price of clothing.' He said 'Give him three thousand dirhams for the cost of clothing.'" The narrator continues: "Thus I went on speaking and enumerating one thing after another, until I said, 'I require a house, and I require a horse.' And he kept saying, 'Give him three thousand dirhams,' until I had received thirty thousand dirhams."

¹ مَجْلِسٌ "A house, an assembly room"; also "a palace." The word خُرُوجٌ shows that it was a country place.

² دَرَابٌ pl. of دَابَّةٌ any riding animal.

³ To graze them in the spring.

⁴ "My father"; mistake of the narrator, as the father himself is speaking.

⁶ They had improved in condition: *lit.* "approved my mark on them."

Al-Baihaqī (on whom may God have mercy) has written ¹ that the family of *Barmak* were unequalled in generosity by any men, and that they used to go out secretly at night, taking money with them which they distributed in alms, and sometimes they knocked at the doors of people and gave them a bag containing from three thousand to five thousand dirhams.

STORY No. 89.

Khālid, the son of *Ṣafwān*, has said, "I went in before *As-Saffāh* one day when alone, ² and said, 'O Prince of the Faithful, I suggest thou shouldst order the curtain to be guarded so that I may impart ³ to thee some advice.' So he ordered this to be done. Then I said, 'O Prince of the Faithful, I have been meditating on this sovereignty that God hath sent ⁴ thee and with which He has favoured ⁵ thee, and I have found thee the most remote of mankind from the enjoyment ⁶ of it, and the most harassed of men in it.' He said, 'How is that, O *Khālid*?' I said, 'Through thy limiting thyself out of the whole world to one wife, and abstaining from many fair and

¹ *Lit.* "said," but *Al-Baihaqī* is a well-known historian.

² وَهُوَ خَالِي الْمَجْلِسِ.

³ يُلْقِي, أَلْقَى orig. "To throw, cast." With عَلَى or إِلَى "To propose something to a person."

⁴ يَسُوقُ, صَاقَ. Orig. "To drive."

⁵ يُؤْتِي, مَنَّ (with عَلَى of the person). "To oblige, do a favour to." مَنَّةٌ "obligation, favour."

⁶ Pl. "pleasures."

beauteous women.'¹ He said, 'O *Khālid*, these are words I have never heard from anyone.' Then he² asked permission to depart, and he granted it to him. Then there came forth to him *Umm Salamah*,³ as he was tapping⁴ his pen on an inkstand which he had before him, and she said, 'O Prince of the Faithful, I see thee moody. What is the matter? Hast thou heard news to sadden thee?' He said, 'Not at all, but *Khālid*, the son of *Ṣafwān*, has imparted something to me which contained good counsel,' and he explained it to her. She said, 'And what didst thou say to the son of the adulteress?' He said, 'He gives me good advice and dost thou revile him?' She then arose and left his presence and sent for a hundred of her slaves,⁵ saying, 'It was for such a day as this that I bought you and kept you⁶ ready. Go, and where-soever ye find *Khālid*, the son of *Ṣafwān*, fall upon him and beat him in every limb.⁷ So I⁷ was sought for, and I went to visit some people and was talking with them, when these men

¹ بَيْضٌ pl. of بَيْضَاءُ — خَرَّأْدُ pl. of خَرَّيْدَةٌ "A virgin; a bashful, modest woman"; also, "an unbored pearl." حَسَنَاءُ pl. of حَسَنٌ.

² Note the abrupt change from direct to indirect narrative and back, not considered wrong in Arabic.

³ His wife.

⁴ يَنْكُتُ, نَكَتَ "To strike the ground with a stick, or with the finger"; an action of one reflecting.

⁵ *Mawlā*, generally "a freed slave" or "any slave." The word also means "cousin" or any "relation."

⁶ يُعِدُّ, أَعَدَّ "To make ready, or provide, for an affair."

⁷ يَرْشُ, رَشَّ "To bruise, crush." *Lit.* "fall upon his limbs, limb by limb, and bruise them."

approached, so I mixed with them and sought refuge¹ in a house. But my mule fell into their hands and they beat it with their clubs² and I remained without shelter from heaven or support from earth.³ I was sitting one day when a body of people rushed upon me saying, 'Answer the summons of the Prince of the Faithful.'

I got up, giving myself up for lost,⁴ and proceeded⁵ until I went in before the Khalifah and found him sitting, and I heard a movement behind the curtain, so I said to myself, 'It is *Umm* Salamah* by God.' The Khalifah said, 'O Khalid, from whence art thou seen?'⁶ I said, 'I have been in an estate of mine.' Then he said, 'Repeat what thou didst say to me one day?' I said, 'Yes, O Prince of the Faithful. The Arabs derive the name of trouble from two rival wives,⁷ for rival wives are the most troublesome of house treasures⁸ and

¹ يَلْجَأُ or لَجِئَ (with اِلَى) "To betake oneself to a place

for refuge." مَلَجَأٌ , pl. مَلَاجِئُ "An asylum."

² أَعْمِدَةٌ , pl. of عَمُودٌ "A tent-pole; a pillar; a bar of iron."

³ i.e., in great fear of my life, unable to go out and unable to stay in. أَظَلَّ "To shade": ظِلٌّ "shade." أَقْلَّ "To carry, support."|

⁴ Lit. "possessing nothing of myself."

⁵ قَامَ means "To get up and proceed"; hence, قَامَ حَتَّى دَخَلَ is correct.

⁶ i.e., "Whence do you come?"

⁷ ضَرْبٌ "Injury, harm." ضَرْبَةٌ "A rival wife."

⁸ ذَخَائِرُ pl. of ذَخِيرَةٌ "A thing treasured, or stored in secret."

female slaves¹ are the bane of houses, and no man marries² two wives, but he is between two live coals,³ one of which burns him with its fire and the other follows him up with its sparks.' He said, 'It was not this.' I replied, 'Nay, it was.' He said, 'Reflect.' I said 'Yes, O Prince of the Faithful; and I told thee three⁴ wives become jealous of each other and cannot hold themselves in patience' (when the husband is with another). He said, 'No, I swear by God, it was not this.' I said 'O Prince of the Faithful, and I told thee that four wives are grief and weariness and trouble⁵ and tumult; for the man is ever between something wanted and a calamity expected.⁶ If he consorts with one of them he fears the evil of the rest, who become to him more hostile than snakes.' He said, 'No, I swear by God, it was not this.' I said, 'It is; and I told thee that the family of *Makhyzūm* is the flower⁷ of the Arabs, and that thou dost own the flower of the flowers and the mistress of all the women of the world; and thou didst tell me thou wert thinking of marrying, and I said to thee, 'Impossible, thou art beating on cold iron; and this can never happen to the end of time.'⁸ He said, 'Woe unto thee, dost thou use falsehood?' I said, 'Is it sport to be cut with swords?'

¹ i.e., concubines. *أمة* pl. of *أمة*.

² *Lit.* "brings two wives together."

³ *جمرة* "A live coal"; pl. *جمرات*, *جمر* and *جمل*.

⁴ *الاربع* of the text is evidently a slip for *الثلاث*. Cf. *Qurʾān* iv. 3.

⁵ *فجّر* "Trouble, annoyance."

⁶ *تترقب* is a misprint for *تترقب*.

⁷ *Lit.* "sweet basil," *ريحان*.

⁸ *الزّمان المعين* *Lit.* "Time that is seen, i.e., present time."

He said, 'Go, for thou art the greatest liar amongst the Arabs.' I said, 'Which¹ is better; that I should lie or that *Umm* Salamah* should kill me?' Then he fell back laughing and said, 'Go, may God Almighty confound thee'; and sounds of laughter rose from behind the curtain, and I returned home, when lo, there came a servant of *Umm* Salamah* bearing five bags of 10,000 dirhams² each and five suits, and he said, 'This is for thee from my mistress, so take it.'"

STORY No. 90.

It is said that a man of 'Irāq made all ready for³ a wine party and invited to it his friends. When they had finished eating and had sat down to drink, and the sounds of lutes and pipes had arisen,⁴ and drink had circulated among them, and the folk were mirthful, one man among them began reflecting on the enjoyment and pleasure they were experiencing,⁵ and he saw before him a beautiful house, and curtains, and carpets, and vessels, and flowers, and fruits, and burning candles, and the interior of the rooms⁶ filled with light, and odours and melody, and he saw young men⁷ of fine form and of

¹ Read فَايْمَا for فَايْمَا.

² بِدْر, pl. of بَدْرَة "A purse containing ten thousand dirhams."

³ بِصَلِّح, أَصْلَح "To arrange well."

⁴ مَزْمَار pl. of مَزْمَار. عَوْد pl. of عَوْد "a musical reed; a flute"; also pl. of مَزْمُور "The Psalms of David."

⁵ Lit. that in which they were, in the way of (مِنْ) —.

⁶ Lit. "doors."

⁷ فُتَيَّان pl. of فُتَيَّان.

perfect grace. So he remained bewildered, deep in thought and amazed at what he saw, and heard, and smelt, of delights and of whatever charms the senses and gladdens the heart, until he became drowsy ¹ and so deep in sleep ² that he was not conscious of anything in that party.³ Then he saw in his dream ⁴ as though he were in the country of the Greeks, and in one of the churches of the Christians, which was illuminated with lamps, adorned with pictures and full of crucifixes, ⁵ and he was among the priests,⁶ who were clothed with sackcloth ⁷ and had censers in their hands in which they burned incense ⁸ and frankincense, and they were chanting ⁹ words of theirs that resembled praises of God, and kept repeating them until the man knew them by heart from the repetition ¹⁰ of them; and their meaning, in Arabic, was, "The

¹ نَعَسَ, يَنعَسُ and يَنعَسُ, inf. n. نَعَاسٌ "To be drowsy; to doze."
نَعَسَ and نَعَسَانِ "Drowsy, dozing."

² غَاصَ فِي نَوْمِهِ *Lit.* "He dived in his sleep."

³ *Lit.* "He could see, hear or smell (يَحِسُ) nothing of the objects (مَحْسُوسَات) that were in the assembly."

⁴ فِيمَا يُرَى النَّائِمُ ⁴ Pass.; *lit.* "among those things that the sleeper is made to see."

⁵ صَلْبَانٍ pl. of صَلِيبٌ "A cross, crucifix."

⁶ قَسِيصِينَ pl. of قَسِيصٌ.

⁷ مَسْحُوحٍ pl. of مَسْحُوحٌ "A garment of thick or coarse hair-cloth."

⁸ يَبْخُرُ, يَبْخَرُ "To burn بَخُور, i.e., incense"; also "to fumigate."

⁹ قَرَأَ in reference with religious books, means "to read in a chanting way."

¹⁰ تَكَرَّرَ, inf. n. of كَرَّرَ "To repeat."

virtuous who praise God Almighty night and day, they are alive in His sight even though they be dead, and the wicked and wrong-doers are dead in the sight of God even though they be alive in the world." Then he beheld a company of Bishops¹ with cups full of wine in their hands, and in their handkerchiefs cakes of bread, which they were distributing to the people, and they were giving them wine to drink² after that. So this man received some of those cakes, and he took with eagerness and desire and sipped³ of that wine, owing to the violence of his hunger and thirst. Then after a time he reflected on what had happened,⁴ how he found himself in⁴ that church and how he was to return to 'Irāq, which was far distant. Then he remembered his friends and their party, and the pleasure and delight in which he had left them, and his longing to be with them became great, and his distaste for that place and for the things he saw contrary to the ordinances of his religion and at variance with his inclination and habit. So his breast became contracted and he was perturbed in his sleep from his vexation, and he awoke and found himself in 'Irāq in his seat and in his place amongst his friends, while those melodies and odours upon which he had been reflecting before his dosing, were as they had been before, and had changed in nothing.

1 أَسْقَفَة pl. of أَسْقَف "A bishop," arabicized from "Episcopos."

2 يَحْسِي, أَحْسَى "To make or give one to sip": تَحَسَّى "To sip or drink by little and little."

3 تَفَكَّرَ فِي حَالِهِ "reflected on his state."

4 حَصَلَ, intrans., "To exist."

STORY No. 91.

It is said that one of the prophets of God said in his communion ¹ with his Lord, "O Lord, why hast thou created mankind after such an age had passed in which thou hadst not created them?" His Lord answered him figuratively, ² "I was a hidden treasure ³ of blessings and excellences and I was recognised of none; so I willed that I should be known." The very learned man ⁴ *Ibn*-l-Jaldī*, the author of the *Ikhwān*-ṣ-Ṣafā*, has remarked that the meaning of this is, "If I had not created creation, these excellences and blessings which I have caused to flow ⁵ and have manifested, viz., the wonders of my creation and those well designed works of mine, would have remained concealed,—works of which tongues are unable to fathom their nature, ⁶ and the understandings of men ⁷ are too bewildered to have an exact knowledge of them."

STORY No. 92.

It is said that enmity and mutual jealousy existed between *Yahya*, the son of *Khālīd Al-Barmakī* and 'Abdullah, the

¹ مَنَاجَاةٌ [inf. n. of نَجَى "To hold a discourse with anyone in private (with acc. of pers.)"]: "secret communion with God."

² رَمَزَ "innuendo" but not the rhetorical name of the figure which is كَنَایَة .

³ كَنْزٌ pl. كُنُوزٌ "Treasure; property buried in the earth."

⁴ عَلَّامَةٌ, intens. adj. from عَلِمَ "To know."

⁵ فَاضَ يَفِیضُ, "To flow": أَفَاضَ يَفِیضُ Causal.

⁶ يَكِلُ كَلَّ "To be or become weary."

⁷ عَقُولُهُم a loose construction; هُمْ apparently refers to خَلْقٌ "creation."

son of *Mālik Al-Khuzā'i*, and that each was expecting the reverse of fortune ¹ of the other. Now when 'Abdullah, the son of *Mālik*, became Governor of *Azərbayjān* and Armenia, one of the head villagers of 'Irāq became distressed in circumstances and ² the means of gaining a livelihood became impossible for him ; so he brought himself to forge ³ a letter purporting ⁴ to come from *Yahya*, the son of *Khālīd Al-Burmakī* to 'Abdullah, the son of *Mālik*, recommending him to his care and charging him ⁵ to help him, being unaware of the estrangement ⁶ between them. Then he set out from the "City of Peace" (Baghdad) to *Azərbayjān* and came to the gate of 'Abdullah, the son of *Mālik*, with the letter. The chamberlain took it, and 'Abdullah said to him, "Admit the bearer of this letter." So he admitted him. Then 'Abdullah said to him, "Thy letter surely is forged,⁷ but

¹ دَوَائِرُ , pl. of دَائِرَةٌ "A turn of fortune" : and especially "an evil accident." دَارَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الدَّوَائِرُ "Calamities befell them."

² فَسَّاقَ بِهِ الْأَمْرُ.

³ افْتَعَلَ "To forge." الْخَطُّوطُ تَفْتَعَلُ "Handwritings are apt to be forged."

⁴ عَلَى لِسَانٍ.

⁵ أَكَّدَ : أَكَّدَ عَلَيْهِ كُلَّ الْكَأِيدِ orig. "To confirm or corroborate a contract, etc."

⁶ تَبَاعَدَ "The becoming alienated, or estranged, from one's family or friends; the keeping aloof, one from another."

⁷ مَفْتَعَلٌ, p.p. of افْتَعَلَ, vide Note 3.

thou hast travelled this long distance¹ and we will not disappoint² thee." The man said, " But the letter is *not* forged, and if it is thy intention to repulse me by³ this accusation, God the Great and Glorious is my sufficiency⁴ and I rely upon Him." 'Abdullah replied, " Art thou willing to be confined in a house and to have thy distress removed, until I write and enquire into the case⁵ and learn the facts⁶ about this letter, and if it be forged⁷ that I should punish thee, and if it be true give thee a reward ?" The man replied, " Yes." So 'Abdullah ordered that he should be confined and his distress relieved; and wrote to his agent in 'Irāq, saying, " A man named So and So, the son of So and So, has brought me a letter from Yahya, the son of *Khālid*; so investigate the affair of this letter and write to me of the facts." So the agent took 'Abdullah's letter to Yahya and read it to him. Yahya called for an inkstand and pen and wrote to him in his own hand, saying, " Such and such a man is one of my particular

¹ طَوَى *طَوَى* orig. " To fold " : طَوَى الْبِلَادَ " He traversed countries." شَقَّةٌ " Distance ; a far-extending space ; difficult road."

² خَابَ " To be disappointed " : خَيَّبَ " To disappoint " : خَيْبَةٌ " Disappointment."

³ *Lit.* " Send me back disappointed."

⁴ حَسْبَ " One who suffices, a sufficiency."

⁵ اسْتَطْلَعَ " To seek or desire information respecting a thing ":

اسْتَطْلَعَ رَأْيَ فُلَانٍ " He looked to see what was the opinion of such a one respecting an affair."

⁶ نَبَأٌ " News of importance."

⁷ مَزُورٌ, p.p. of زَوَّرَ " To forge, falsify."

intimates, and of those that have the strongest claims upon me,¹ and your agent² has informed me of your doubts with regard to him. Banish your doubts (May I be thy sacrifice), and let his return to me be hastened in a manner worthy of thee." Then when the agent had departed, *Yahya* said to his companions, "What say ye of a man who has forged a letter from me to '*Abdullah*, the son of *Mālik*, and taken it from the 'City of Peace' to *Azarbayjān*?" They all replied, "We think that thou shouldst disgrace³ him and expose⁴ him, and publish the matter⁵ to all, so that others may be prevented by his example, and he may be a warning⁶ and byeword⁷ among men." He said, "Is that verily your opinion?" They said, "Yes." He said, "May God curse such an opinion! What a petty and degraded opinion is yours. Woe unto you; this man was distressed for his livelihood, and trusted me (not to expose him) and relied on me, and set out to *Azarbayjān* in spite of its great distance and the difficulty of its road. Do ye advise me to disappoint him of what he hoped from me, so that his opinion of

¹ مِنْ أَوْجِبِهِمْ حَقًّا عَلَيَّ.

² مَاحِب means a business or any other associate.

³ يَفْضَحُ, فَضَحَ "To expose the vices or faults of one."

⁴ هَتَكَ مَنْرَهُ "He rent open his veil or covering"; meaning, "He made known his vices and faults: he disgraced or dishonoured him."

⁵ Lit. "Make public his affair."

⁶ نَكَيْلٌ "An example, a punishment": نَكَيْلٌ "Punishing, or making an example."

⁷ قَدْ صَارَ أَحَدُوهُ "He has become the subject of a story, a byeword."

me should change to bad? I swear by God, I am not one to accept this advice from you." Thereupon he told them what he had written to 'Abdullah, and they were amazed at his generosity and at his tolerating falsehood. So the letter in his writing reached 'Abdullah; and he sent for the man, who had fallen in his estimation on account of the suspicion that had crossed his mind, and when he came in before him he said, "This letter of my brother's has come to confirm thy statement, and he has asked me to send thee back quickly to him." Then he ordered two hundred thousand dirhams to be given him, and corresponding¹ equipage,² and mules, and hand-maidens, and slave boys, and sent him away.³ When he arrived at the gate of *Yahya*, the son of *Khālid*, he brought in all⁴ he had received and presented it before him. Then *Yahya* ordered him the same amount and included him⁵ among his special retainers.

"I have left one course for another, according as circumstances decide.⁶
Despise me not, for I am a man who has experienced many changes in the course of time."

¹ *وَمَا يَتَّبِعُهَا مِنْ* Lit. "and what usually goes with, or accompanies these; viz.:—"

² *دَوَابٌّ*, better *خَيْلٌ* or *أَفْرَاسٌ*.

³ *أَصْدَرَ*, "To go, or turn, away"; from a country or place : causal.

⁴ *أَجْمَعُ*, a simple corroborative. *جَاؤُوا أَجْمَعُونَ* "They came all of them, or all together."

⁵ *أَتَبَنَّهُ* "He wrote his name, set it down, registered it."

⁶ This difference of tenses not incorrect in Arabic. The past tense means "I have done and will do."

STORY No. 93.

It is said,—‘*Abd*-l-Malik*’ *’bn* Marwān*, got separated from ¹ his companions and came to a desert Arab and said, “Dost thou know ‘*Abd*-l-Malik*’ *’bn* Marwān*?” He said, “Yes, he is a vile oppressor.” He said, “Woe unto thee! I am ‘*Abd*-l-Malik*’ *’bn* Marwān*.” He said, “May God grant thee no long life, nor bring thee near us. Thou devourest the property of God, and hast failed to honour ² Him.” The *Khalifah* said, “Woe unto thee, I can make and I can mar.” He replied, “May God never send me thy good nor ward off from me thy evil.” Then, when the troops came up he said, “O Prince of the Faithful, conceal what happened between me and thee, for conversations are confidential.” ³ ‘*Abd*-l-Malik*’ laughed and gave him a reward.

STORY No. 94.

It is said that a desert Arab was made Governor of *Bahrayn*, and he assembled the Jews and said to them, “What did ye to ‘*Isā*’ the son of *Maryam*, on whom be peace?” They answered, “We killed him.” He said, “I swear by God, ye shall not go forth from prison until ye pay ⁴ his

¹ انقطع عن Lit. “was cut off from.”

² Past for Pres. Tense to signify continuity of action.

³ المجلس : المَجَالِسُ بِالْإِمَانَةِ “A sitting-place, assembly”; hence,

“discourse or conversation delivered or taking place in a *مَجَالِس*.”

بِالْإِمَانَةِ is “on trust, in confidence,” or “a trust to which one ought not to be unfaithful.”

⁴ يؤدي أدى “To pay, to discharge a debt.”

blood-money,¹ and they came not out until he had taken from them the full fine.

STORY No. 95.

A certain learned man has said : There was described to *Al-Ma'mūn* a damsel, who wrote verse, and was pre-eminent in beauty and accomplishments, and her name was *Fazl*. So he sent to buy her ; and she was brought to him just at the time he was setting out for the country of the Greeks. Then when he was on the point of ² putting on his coat of mail, she occurred to his mind and he called for her ; so she came out to him, and when he saw her he admired her. She said, "What is this ?" He said, "I am setting out for the country of the Greeks." She said, "Thou hast killed me, my lord, I swear by God," and tears flowed³ down her cheeks. Then *Al-Ma'mūn* said in verse :—

"A tear⁴ like a fresh pearl⁵ flowed down his smooth⁶ and oval face, from his dark eye, at the time of separation."

¹ وَدِيَّ pl. دِيَات from وَدَى.

² رَجَمَ بِهِمَّ, هَمَّ بِهِ "To think of doing something, to be on the point of."

³ ذَرَفَ الدَّمْعَ intrans. "The tears flowed": ذَرَفَتِ الدَّمْعَ, trans. "It (the eye) shed tears."

⁴ The text has دَمْعَةً "his tears," but as the verb مَطَّلَتْ is in the feminine, while دَمْعٌ is masc., it is evident that دَمْعَةً is a mistake for دَمْعَةٍ.

⁵ Lit. "like fresh pearls"; pl. the sing. could also be correct.

⁶ أَسِيلٌ, applied to a cheek means "smooth and long"; or "soft, tender, thin and smooth."

Then he said to her, "Complete this." So she said in verse :—

"—At the time when the rising moon was about to set ¹ from us.
In truth eyes are exposed at the time of departure."

Al-Ma'mūn clasped her to his breast, and then said to his slave *Masrūr*, "Pay her due respect and give her a suitable dwelling, and prepare for her whatever she needs, of apartments and attendants and handmaidens, until the time of my return."

STORY NO. 96.

It is said that a certain one had a beautiful daughter whom a rich man² married, and she became attached to him. She had been with him but a short time when he died, and she mourned greatly over him. She used to go into a garden belonging to her father, where she could be alone, and she used to weep and recite these verses :—

"I weep for a companion,³ whom Time hath betrayed and so he died.
I said to Time sorrowfully, 'O Time, thou hast done ill ;⁴
Wherefore⁵ hast thou left my mother and father and begun with my companion ?
He was the kindest of souls to me in my home.'⁶"

¹ أَفُول inf. n. of أَفَلَ "to set (moon, sun, or stars)." "From us, means "disappear from our view."

² Lit. "A man from among the people of wealth."

³ الْفُؤَاد, "Constant companion, mate, fellow."

⁴ أَسَات for أَهَات, by poetical license. ⁵ لِمَ for لِمَ.

⁶ خَلَوَات pl. of خَلْوَة "Private conference," also "a private place ; a place to which one retires for privacy." Here the plural refers to "times of privacy."

Now her father noticed¹ her, and heard her repeating the lines, so he said to her, "What wast thou saying, my daughter?" She said, "O father I found that the water had become scanty and thirst had seized the date-palm,² and when I saw this it grieved me so I recited:—

"I weep for the date-palms : water failed them, so they died.

I said to the water with sorrow, 'O Water, thou hast done ill ;

Wherefore hast thou passed by (without injury) the sown field and the vine and begun with the date-palms ?

They were the best thing that I had among fruit-trees.'"

Her father said to her, "O daughter, dost thou wish me to marry thee to someone?" She said "No, by God, oh my father, I have no desire for a husband." Not long after she died,³ and may God on high have mercy on her!

STORY No. 97.

It is said that *Aḥmad** 'bn *Isrā'īl*^a wrote to *Al-Wāsiq Billah*, after he [the latter] had deposed him from the office of collecting⁴ revenue, and had ordered him to be fettered while his accounts were being verified, saying, "O Prince of the Faithful, for what is one deserving of degradation, one whose sanctuary⁵ of honour thou art after God and

¹ يَقْظِنُ, فُظِنَ "To be intelligent": فُظِنَتْ "intelligence, sagacity."

فُظِنَ with ل after it, means "To take notice of, to remark."

² نَخْلٌ, coll. "palms."

³ Lit. "She remained but a short while till she died."

⁴ خَرَجَ, "A land-tax"; also, "a poll-tax": دِيُونُ الْخَرَاجِ, "Land Revenue Department." The repetition is uncalled for.

⁵ مَوْئِلٌ, Noun of place from وَّآلَ, "To take refuge with."

His apostle, and whose soul ceaseth not to hope for the renewal of thy undeserved kindness to him and for the repetition of thy favours towards him, and whose eyes are longing¹ for thy favour² and for the increase of thy benefits³ towards him? So grant him, O Prince of the Faithful, what becomes⁴ thee, and free him from what is a blot on thy name; for he hath no place to turn to from thee, no reliance on any save thee." So the Khalifah ordered him to be set free and treated him kindly, and he rose to a high rank in his service.

STORY No. 98.

It is said that a man had a slave, whom he sold and said to the purchaser, "I declare⁵ that he has no fault except one." He asked, "And what is that?" He replied, "Calumny."⁶ He said, "Thou art absolved from him, for I will not accept anything he says." The narrator continues, "Not long after this, the slave came to his master and said, 'Thy wife wishes to kill thee and wed another.' He said 'What makes

¹ طَمَعٌ is "To lift up the eyes towards any object; to covet it eagerly."

² تَطَوَّلَ, inf. n. of تَطَوَّلَ, "To do favour to."

³ مَنِيْعَةٌ, pl. مَنَائِعُ, "A kind act."

⁴ زَانَ, يَزِينُ, trans. "To adorn; be an ornament, an honour, to"; opp. of يَشِينُ, شَانُ, "To disgrace; dishonour."

⁵ بَرَأَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ means "To declare oneself not responsible for any fault in a thing sold, the same being pointed out to the buyer."

⁶ نَمَّ، نَمٌّ، from نَمَّ، النَّمِيْمَةُ, "To calumniate; propagate falsehoods."

thee know this ?' He answered, 'I found it out, so do thou feign sleep¹ in bed, and what I now say will be revealed to thee.' Then he went to the wife and said, 'Thy husband wishes to cast thee off and wed another wife, so what dost thou say to my giving thee a spell,² so that his affection may be won back to thee.' She said, 'Yes, and I will give thee such and such a reward.' He replied, 'Bring me three hairs from underneath his chin.' So when she went near her husband to take the hairs, he arose against her with his sword, having now no doubt as to the truth of what the slave had said to him, and slew her. Then came the wife's brothers and slew the husband ; and they both perished³ through the evil conduct⁴ of their slave and their credence of his calumny. So we take refuge with God against calumny and ask protection against it and against those that practise it.⁵

STORY No. 99.

It is said that *Abū Nu'ūs* once went⁶ to the gate of *Ar-Rashīd*, who, when he heard of his being there, sent for some eggs

¹ تَنَافَلَ : the form تَفَاعَلَ expresses among other things "Pretending or feigning," as, تَعَامَى "To pretend to be blind," تَمَارَضَ "To feign sickness."

² بَرَقَى, رَقَى "To charm," رُقِيَّةٌ : "A charm or spell." بَرَقَى, رَقَى "To ascend."

³ ذَهَبَ, "To go, depart ; also, be destroyed."

⁴ سَرُّ الصَّنِيعِ, "Evil act."

⁵ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّهَا, *lit.* "and against its masters, i.e., those characterized by it."

⁶ أَتَى إِلَى, or أَتَى with acc., "To go to."

and said to the company with him, "Here is *Abū Nu'ās* at the gate ; now let every one of you take an egg and put it underneath him ; and when he comes in I will display ¹ anger against all and say to you, ' Now, lay each one of you an egg, or I order your heads to be cut off,' so that we may see what he will do."² Then he summoned him and he came in ; and after a while the conversation turned upon something that angered the *Khalīfah*, and he manifested great anger against them, and said, " Every one of you is just like a hen, and yet he meddles with what does not concern ³ him. Now, lay ye, each one of you, an egg, for that is your business, otherwise I will order your heads to be cut off." Then he turned to the man who was on his right hand and said, " Thou, the first ; lay an egg." So he strained ⁴ himself, and cackled, and changed countenance, and then produced an egg. The *Khalīfah* went the round of them like this, until the turn came to *Abū Nu'ās*, who then clapped his arms ⁵ against his sides, and cried out and said in his cry, " Cock-a-doodle-doo," and added, " O our Lord, hens are useless without a cock. These are the hens and I am their cock." The *Khalīfah* laughed until he fell ⁶ on his back, and he thought the repartee very clever.

¹ *أَظْهَرَ*, *يُظْهِرُ*, here means " To make a pretence of " ; but to show real anger may also be expressed by *أَظْهَرَ*.

² *Lit* : " What he will say (*يَقُولُ*)."

³ *عَنَّا الْأَمْرَ*, " The affair concerned him ; related to him ; was of his business."

⁴ *يَضْرِبُ*, *يَضْرِبُ* : also, " To press ; squeeze."

⁵ *عَضِدُهُ*, " The upper arm, from the elbow to the shoulder-blade."

⁶ *اسْتَلْقَى*, " To lie on the back."

STORY No. 100.

A thief entered the house of *Mālik** 'bn* *Dīnār* in the night, and went round it but found nothing in it. When he was on the point of departing, *Mālik* raised his head and said, "O such a one (i.e., friend), thou hast sought the world¹ but hast not found it with us; now what sayest thou to turning to the next world?" The thief assented, and advanced towards *Mālik* and repented at his hands, and when morning dawned *Mālik* took him and went with him to the mosque. When the pupils saw him they said to the Professor,² "What is this man?" He said, "He is a thief that came to snare us, but we snared him." Thus the thief became, by the blessing of *Mālik*, one of the greatest saints.

STORY No. 101.

A Persian sage said, "I have taken from everything the best quality it had."³ So he was asked, "What hast thou taken from the dog?" He replied, "Its love for its household and its protection⁴ of its master." He was asked, "And what hast thou taken from the raven?" He replied, "Its great caution." He was asked, "What hast thou taken from the pig?" He replied, "Its going early in the morning⁵ in quest of its wants." Then he was asked,

¹ دُنْيَا here means "The goods of the present world."

² *Shaykh* "An old man; the head of a tribe; and (as here) a professor."

³ أَحْسَنَ مَا فِيهِ, *lit.* "the best that there is in it."

⁴ دَفْعًا, "To defend; to repel from."

⁵ بُكْرَةً, *adv.*, "early in the morning." *inf. n.* of يَكْرُو, يَكْرُو = قَدَا, قَدَا = يَكْرُو, يَكْرُو

“And what hast thou taken from the cat?” He answered,
 “Its blandishment when it wants something.”

STORY No. 102.

It is said that a man went before *Sulaymān*, upon whom be peace, and said to him, “O Prophet of God, teach me the speech of birds.¹ He replied, “I will teach thee on condition that thou inform no one of it [i.e., of what the animals say], and if thou informest any one, thou diest.” So he accepted that and *Sulaymān* taught him, and the man returned to his house, and evening came on. Now he had an ass, and an ox, and a cock, and the ass was asking the ox, “How didst thou this day?” And he answered, “I passed it in trouble and hardship.” The ass said, “Dost thou wish to have no burden laid on thee to-morrow and so be at rest?” He replied, “Yes.” Then the ass said, “Eat no fodder to-night.” So he did so, and the man was listening to their speech. When morning came he ordered that they should load the ass instead of the ox. Then when night came on, the ass returned to its manger² and the ox asked him, “How didst thou to-day? It seems thou hast done no work.” He replied, “Nay,³ I have worked; and fatigue has come to me just as it used to come to thee; but I heard that they are preparing⁴ to sacrifice thee and are saying, ‘He is sick and fit only for killing—

¹ مَنْطِقُ الطَّيْرِ is a general term for the language of animals, not exclusively of birds.

² مَعْلَفٌ, “A manger”; *lit.*, a place for fodder (مَلَفٌ): syn.

مَنْدُودٌ.

³ بَلَى, *lit.* “Yes, certainly.”

⁴ سَتَعِدُّ, inf. n. اِسْتَعْدَادٌ. It is intransitive.

before he dies of his own accord.'¹ Now if thou desirest safety eat thy fodder." Then the man, understanding what they said, laughed, and his wife said to him, "What art thou laughing at?" He replied, "Nothing." Then she persisted,² but he did not tell her, fearing lest he should die. She exclaimed, "If thou dost not tell me, I shall think thou art surely mad, or that thou hast a wife besides me." He answered, "If I tell thee I shall die," but she would not give in to him,³ and he could not escape her, so he said, "Give me a respite⁴ until I make my will," and she consented. Next day he was engaged in making his will,⁵ so the ass and ox refrained⁶ from eating and drinking; but the cock did not stop its crowing and rejoicing. Then his comrades said to him, "Our master is dying; why this rejoicing of thine?" He answered, "Death is better for this man than life." They asked, "Why so?" He replied, "I have twenty under my care and I manage⁷ them [fem.] but he cannot rule over one wife and cannot keep her at arm's length." They said,

¹ If it dies a natural death, it would be unlawful to eat its flesh.

² يُلْحِقُ (with عَلَى of the pers.), "To importune; press hard."

³ يَطَّاعُ (with acc. of the pers.), "To comply with":
يُطِيعُ, "To obey."

⁴ مَهْلَةً : يَهْلُ, أَهْلُ, "A delay, respite."

⁵ يَوْصِي, أَوْصَى, "To make a will or testament (وَصِيَّةً)."

⁶ أَمْسَكَ (with مِّن), "To abstain from"; أَمْسَكَ (with acc.), "To keep, hold."

⁷ يَعُولُ, عَالٌ, prop. "To feed, sustain, one's family or household; to supply them with the means of subsistence."

“What should he do with her?” He answered, “He should take a whip and beat her until she dies or repents.” The man exclaimed, “The cock hath spoken truly,” and getting up he seized a whip and beat her until she was quiet¹ and gave up her demand.

STORY No. 103.

It is said that a certain king was engrossed² in the love of women, and his minister used to remonstrate with him on that. One of the king's singing-girls noticed the change in his manner towards them, and said to him, “O my master, what is this?” He said to her, “Such a one of my ministers has remonstrated with me on my affection for you.” The damsel exclaimed, “Give me to him, O king, and thou shalt see what I will do with him.” So he gave her to the minister; and when he was alone with her, she denied herself to him, so that desire for her became strong in his heart. Then she said, “Thou shalt not approach me until I have bestridden thee and thou hast carried me the distance of some steps.” He assented. So she put on him a saddle; and she put a bridle over his head and rode upon him. Now she had previously sent news of this [her intention] to the king; so he burst in³ on the minister as he was in this state. He exclaimed, “What is this, O minister? Thou didst forbid me to love them, and yet this is thy condition with them.” He replied, “O king, this is what I dreaded for thee,” and the king approved of this smart retort.

¹ سَكَنَ, “To become quiet”; سَكَتَ “To become silent.”

² أُرْلَعَ بِ (with ب), “To be fond of, attached to” = أُرْلَعَ بِ.

³ هَجَمَ عَلَى. “To rush upon; attack”: inf. n., هَجُومٌ.

STORY No. 104.

Hishām Al-Kalbī has related that a party of the tribe of the *Banī Ḥanīfah* went out to recreate themselves on a mountain in their territory, and on the way a young man among them met with a maiden, at whom he gazed ¹ long: he said to his companions, "I swear by God, I will not leave this spot until I communicate with her, and inform her of my love for her." They remonstrated with him, but he refused to desist, ² and commenced sending messages to the girl, and love for her became deep-rooted in his heart. So his companions departed, but the young man remained on the mountain, and went to the maiden wearing a sword, as she was sleeping between two brothers of hers. He awakened her, and she exclaimed, "Depart, lest my brothers should awake, for they will kill thee." He replied, "Death, I swear by God, is easier for me to bear than my present state; but if thou wilt give me thy hand to place upon my heart, I will go." Then she gave him her hand, and he placed it upon his heart and breast, and went his way. When the second night came, he went to her while she was as before, and awakened her. She exclaimed, "Who is it that says:—

'When thou visitest the tribe of her whom thou lovest to visit, they present ³ thee with naught save swords ⁴ and lances?'"⁵

¹ يَرْمُقُ, رَمَقَ, "To look long at; follow with the eye."

² يَكْفُ, كَفَّ, "To desist"; also, "to restrain": both trans. and intrans.

³ يَنْحِفُ, أَنْحَفَ, "To make a present to, in token of courtesy or honour." نَحْفَةٌ, "a rare present."

⁴ السَّيْفُ, pl. of أَلْبَيْضُ "The sword," because of its whiteness.

⁵ أَسْلٌ, pl. of أَسَلَةٌ.

wishing to frighten him by this. He replied, "The same poet that says :—

'Separation is more deadly to me than what I fear from them. I am drowning, so what fear have I of being wet ?' " ¹

Then he said, "If thou wilt give me power over thy lips to kiss them, I will go away." So she allowed him, and he kissed them long and then departed. So love for him took root in her heart as great as the love for her that had taken root in his, and their story became noised abroad ² in the tribe. So the family of the maiden said, "What place is there for this rake in the mountain? Let us go to him that we may drive him out this night." So the girl sent to him at the close of the day, saying, "My people will come to thee to-night, so beware." When evening came he sat down at his high watching place with his bow and his arrow. Now in the early night rain fell, so the attention of the tribe was diverted from him; but towards the end of the night the clouds cleared up ³ and the moon rose; then the maiden longed for him and went forth in quest of him with a female companion of hers of that tribe, upon whom [fem.] she relied. Then the youth, seeing them, imagined they belonged to the people who were in search of him; so he shot and failed not to hit the maiden's heart, and she fell dead. Thereupon the other girl cried out; and the youth descended ⁴ from the mountain, and lo, the maiden was dead, and the other by her. Then he wept over her like a mother ⁵ over her child, and exclaimed :—

¹ بَلَّكَ, 'Moisture.' بَلَّ, inf. n. بَلَّلَ, "To moisten."

² بَشَّرَ, "To spread (news, disease, etc.)."

³ انْقَشَعَ, "To be dissipated by the wind." نَشَعَ, "To dissipate, the clouds (wind)."

⁴ انْهَدَرَ : also "to sail down the river."

⁵ كَلَّتْ, "A bereaved mother"; from كَلَّتْ, "She lost her child."

My sweet basil has been snatched¹ from my hand, O eye flow with tears and be not dry.

She was my joy when my soul felt aversion at the companionship of relations and friends ;

She was a garden in which was my pasturing² and a fountain at which I drank.

She was my hand and my strength, and Time has snatched away my hand from my hand."

Then said the maiden who was standing over her :—

'The raven croaked³ announcing what thou drestest, and there is no averting destiny.

Thou weapest yet it is *thou* that hast killed her. Be resigned or else kill thyself."⁴

Then the youth stabbed himself with a knife he had with him and died, and the people of the encampment came, and finding those two dead, buried them in a single grave.

STORY No. 105.

It is said that a lion, a fox, and a wolf, becoming companions⁵ went out to hunt, and captured an ass, a gazelle, and a hare. The lion said to the wolf, "Divide our booty amongst us." He replied, "The ass is for thee, the hare for the fox, and the gazelle for me." Thereupon the lion clawed⁶

¹ اِخْتَلَسَ, "To snatch away"; also, "to embezzle."

² رَعَى from رَعَى, "To pasture at pleasure"; also, "to enjoy oneself."

³ نَعَبَ, "To utter the cry, or croak, that is asserted to be ominous of separation (a raven, or crow)."

⁴ نَحَرَ, "To kill, slaughter." اِنْتَحَرَ, "To kill oneself; commit suicide."

⁵ اِصْطَفَوْا, "They associated together": of the measure اِفْتَعَلَ, the ʿ changing to ṣ for euphony.

⁶ مَخَلَبَ : خَلَبَ "claw"; pl. مَخَالِبُ.

him and tore out one of his eyes. The fox exclaimed, "God confound him! How ignorant is he about division." The lion said, "Come now, oh *Abū Mu'āwiyah*, and divide it." The fox replied, "O *Abu 'l-Hārīṣ*, the matter is too simple;¹ the ass is for thy breakfast, the gazelle for thy evening meal, and—eat the hare between whiles."² The lion, said, "God destroy thee! What a good judge thou art! Whence hast thou learned this?" He replied, "From the eye of the wolf."

Note.—*Abū Mu'āwiyah* is a *kunyah* for the fox, and *Abu 'l-Hārīṣ* for the lion. There are many similar *kunyahs*, such as *Ibn Awā* for the jackal.

STORY No. 106.

It is said that *As-Sirāj** *'l-Warrāq*³ (the Stationer) was once in company with *Abu 'l-Husayn Al-Jazzār* (the Butcher) and *Ibn* 'l-Fuqaysī*, when there passed by them a maiden of surpassing beauty, and *As-Sirāj* exclaimed:—

"Her bearing⁴ indicates elegance, and her saliva is more delicate than wine."⁵

¹ أَرْفَعُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ *lit.*, "Clearer than that, i.e., than that it should need any knowledge."

² خَلَلَ : تَخَلَّلَ "An interstice or intervening space between two things."

³ وَرَاقٌ "A stationer; copyist": here a surname having its origin in the man's occupation.

⁴ شَمَالٌ, pl. of شِمَالٌ "A nature; a natural disposition."

⁵ عِلَاقَةٌ, "The purest and most excellent of wine, such as flows from the grapes without their being pressed."

Then said *Abu 'l-Husayn Al-Jazzār* :—

“And in her cheeks are roses, but the scorpions of her temples ¹ forbid one to gather them.”

And *Ibn* 'l-Fuqaysī* said :—

“If the Khalifate were given to one possessed of beauty, then it would be her due to have the Khalifate.”

STORY No. 107.

It is said that the *Wazīr Nizām* 'l-Mulk, Abu 'l-Hasan 'Alī*,² went forth one day to prayers. There he sat for a while and then turning to those present, exclaimed, “Here is a line; I want one to precede it; and it is this :—

‘Verily it is as if I, and he, and they were (respectively) Hope, its Attainment, and Fate—the obstacle between the two.’”

Now in the assembly was *Mas'ūd Al-Khujandī Ash-Shāfi'i* and he recited extempore ³ :—

“By my father is ransomed ⁴ my beloved, who visited me disguised, but spies ⁵ came on the scene so she ⁶ turned and fled.”

¹ i.e., “The curled locks of hair hanging down upon the temples.”

² Read *أَبَا الْحَسَنِ عَلِيًّا* for *بِوَالْحَسَنِ عَلِيًّا*. The uniform order of proper names is first the surname (*نِظَامُ الْمَلِكِ*), then the *Kunya* (*أَبَا الْحَسَنِ*), and lastly the personal name (*عَلِيًّا*).

³ *أَرْتَجَلْ مُرْتَجَلًا*, “To do or produce without previous preparation.”

⁴ The word *مَفْدِي* is understood.

⁵ *رَشَائِد*, pl. of *رَاشٍ*, “Intriguers.”

⁶ *Lit.* “he,” females being often spoken of in Arabic poetry as males.

STORY No. 108.

It is said that *Al-Mahdī* one day at noon entered the chamber of his handmaiden *Al-Khayzurān* ¹ taking her un-awares, and he found her bathing. So when she saw him, she covered herself ² with her hair so that no part of her person was visible. This pleased him and he thought her action seemly. Afterwards, returning to his assembly-room, he asked, "What poets are present at the gate?" He was informed that *Abū Nu'ūs*, and *Bashshār*, the son of *Burd*, were there. He said, "Let both come before me." So they were brought in and they seated themselves. He said, "Let each of you recite verses appropriate to what is in my mind." Then *Bashshār*, the son of *Burd*, began in verse:—

"I have avoided you though my heart was inclined towards you. By my life, may that avoided place be ransomed.

When they (the beloved) are mentioned I pay no attention, but not from weariness; for verily the mention of you is a thing endeared to me.

They said, 'Avoid us and do not draw near us'; but how, when you are my need, can I avoid you?

Yet they are more dainty ³ to us than manna, and pleasanter and sweeter ⁴ than the water of life." ⁵

The *Khalifah* said, "Well said! and yet I swear by God thou hast not hit the mark." Then *Abū Nu'ūs* said in verse:—

"She cast ⁶ off her shirt to pour water (on her body) and her exceeding modesty rosied her cheeks.

She placed in the breeze when unrobed her shapely body, more delicate than the breeze itself.

¹ The literal meaning of this word is "a cane, pliable and smooth."

² جَلَّتْ : تَجَلَّتْ, "To cover so as not to leave anything uncovered."

³ Write أَحْلَى : relative of حُلُو "sweet."

⁴ ماء عَذْبٍ : أَعْدَبٍ, "Fresh water, that has the least specific gravity."

⁵ Note the *iltifāt*, or change of persons in 'you' and 'they,' which both refer to the beloved.

⁶ نَزَعَ : يَنْزِعُ، syn. نَزَعَ, "To take off one's clothes."

She stretched out her hand ¹ soft as water, towards the water ready in the bath.²

Then, when she had finished her bath,³ and was about to seize her cloak, Rising cautiously and peering ⁴ ahead like a roe separated from the herd, She beheld the person of a detective ⁵ coming nearer and nearer, so she lowered ⁶ darkness over the light.

Her morning vanished beneath a night, and water continued to flow over water.

Glory be to God who hath created ⁷ her the most beautiful of women."

Al-Mahdī exclaimed, "Bring the sword and the skin!"⁸ He said, "Why O Prince of the Faithful?" *Al-Mahdī* replied, "Because thou wast with us." He said, "No, I swear by God, O Prince of the Faithful. I have merely said a verse that came into my mind." So he ordered four thousand dirhams to be given to him, and sent him away.

STORY No. 109.

Ar-Rabī' has related, saying, "I never saw a man stouter of heart or more ready in argument than a certain man of the people of *Kūfah*, whom *Al-Manṣūr* had brought (thence)owing

¹ رَاةٌ مِنْهَا, lit. "her palm."

² فِي الْإِنَاءِ, lit. "in the vessel."

³ قَصَّتْ وَطَرًا, Cf. Qur'ān, xxxiii. 37.

⁴ اشْرَأَبَ, quadriliteral, "To stretch forth the neck to look."

⁵ رَقِيبٌ, "Watcher, spier."

⁶ يَسِيلُ أَسْبَلَ, "To let down as a curtain."

⁷ بِرَّأَهَا by poetical license for الْبَارِئُ : "The Creator."

⁸ نَطَعٌ or نَطْعٌ, "A leather on which criminals were decapitated."

to certain false information ¹ lodged against him by some one, to the effect that he had in his possession property and deposits belonging to the house of *Umayyah*. When he was present *Al-Manṣūr* said to him, 'Produce the deposits of the house of *Umayyah* and their property which thou hast got.' The man answered, 'O Prince of the Faithful, art thou the heir to the house of *Umayyah*?' He replied, 'No.' He said, 'Art thou an executor of theirs?' He said, 'No.' The man said, 'Then, wherefore am I to give up to thee what I hold of their property and deposits?' When he said this, *Al-Manṣūr* bent his head thinking what sound argument to advance, and then, raising his head said, 'The house of *Umayyah* acted treacherously towards the Muslims as regards their property and persons, and as I am the agent of the Muslims for their dues, it is incumbent on me to demand what has been taken from them by way of dishonesty and to restore it to the treasury of the Muslims.' The man said, 'O Prince of the Faithful! it remains for thee to give an adequate proof that this property, which I have, is part of these frauds and of nothing else, for these men had money from various sources.'" The narrator continues, "Thereupon *Al-Manṣūr* bent down his head for a long time, ² seeking an argument to use against him, but could find none, so he turned towards me and said, 'O *Rabī*', let the man go, for I swear by God, I have never talked to a man like him.' Then he (the *Khalīfah*) said to him, 'Ask thy need, if thou hast any.' The man said, 'I swear by God, I have no request, except the sending of a letter by a messenger to my family,

¹ يَسْعَى (with ب of the pers.), "To lay false information against": سَعَاةٌ "A false charge secretly preferred against a person."

² طَوِيلًا = مَدَامًا.

informing them of my safety ; for their hearts are anxious for me and for news of what has happened to me.' *Al-Manṣūr* gave directions for that, and then the man said, " O Prince of the Faithful, I never had any property or deposits belonging to the house of *Umayyah*, and I wish the Prince of the Faithful to confront me with the man who has falsely informed against me to him." *Al-Manṣūr* asked him, ' Why didst thou not deny it ? ' He answered, ' Because when I stood in this position, I considered argument ¹ safer than denial.' ² So *Al-Manṣūr* ordered the informer to be brought, and when he came, lo ! he was a slave of the man and had absconded from him. He said, ' O Prince of the Faithful, this, I swear by God, is my slave who ran away from me and stole from me three thousand dinars, and squandered ³ them.' Then *Al-Manṣūr* intimidated ⁴ the slave, who then said, ' He has spoken the truth, by God, O Prince of the Faithful, and I merely lied about him that I might divert him from searching for me.' *Al-Manṣūr* said, ' Forgive him his crime and offence for my sake.' He replied, ' I call thee to witness, O Prince of the Faithful, that he is free for God's sake and that I will give him from my property another three thousand dinars.' *Al-Manṣūr* said, ' He ⁵ did not want all this from thee.' He replied, ' This is but little for one for whom the Prince of the Faithful intercedes.' *Al-Manṣūr* was pleased with what he said, and ordered a handsome robe to be given him, and ever wondered at his firmness in

¹ اِحْتِجَاجٌ inf. n. of اِحْتَجَّ " To adduce arguments."

² اِنْكَرَ = اِنْكَرَ inf. n. of اِنْكَرَ, اِنْكَرَ.

³ اِتْلَفَ, اِتْلَفَ, " To squander ; destroy."

⁴ اَشَدَّ عَلَى, " To speak severely to ; press hard."

⁵ The correct reading seems to be مَا رَدَّنَا, " We did not want."

argument and his presence of mind and the nobility of his action."

STORY No. 110.

It is said that a certain king of Persia was corpulent and unwieldy¹ to such a degree that he was useless to himself. So he assembled together physicians to cure him of this, but the more they tried to cure him the more he increased in fat. Then there was brought to him a skilful physician, who said to him, "I will cure thee, O king, but grant me three days' respite so that I may consider and observe thy star,² and the medicines that will suit thee." Then when the three days had elapsed, he said, "O king, I have observed thy star, and it appeared to me that thou hast remaining but forty days of thy life. So if thou dost not believe me, keep me under arrest³ that thou mayest be able to avenge⁴ thyself on me." Then the king ordered his confinement, and began to prepare for⁵ death, and abandoned all pleasures; sorrow and grief mounted him, and he shut himself off from men. Each day that elapsed he increased in grief and his state worsened,⁶ until the specified days were over.

¹ مَثْقَلًا, *lit.* "rendered heavy."

² طَالَعٌ *lit.*, "that which appears by rising": hence, "a star; horoscope."

³ أَحْبَسْنِي عِنْدَكَ = "Keep me in confinement at thy house, or in the prison."

⁴ أَقْنَصْ, "To punish": قَمَاصٌ, "Punishment."

⁵ تَأَمَّرَ (with لِ of the thing) = اسْتَعَدَّ.

⁶ يَتَنَاقَصُ, "To become less and less; diminish."

Then he sent for the doctor and spoke to him about the matter. He said, "O king, I have only done this as a stratagem to diminish thy corpulence.¹ I could devise no remedy for thee but this: *now* medicine will benefit thee." So the king gave him a costly robe of honour, and ordered a large sum to be given to him.

STORY No. 111.

A certain king asked his minister, "Does education² overcome nature or nature overcome education?" He answered, "Nature is the stronger because it is a root, while education is a branch, and all branches revert to their root."³ Thereupon the king called for wine, and sent⁴ for a number of cats, which presented themselves with candles in their hand⁵ and stood around him. So he said to the minister, "Behold thy error in thinking that nature is the stronger." The minister replied, "Give me the respite⁶ of this night." He said, "I have done so." So when the next night came, the minister took a mouse⁷ in his sleeve, and, having tied a string to its

¹ ذَهَابَ شَحْمَكَ, *Lit.* "The going away of thy fat."

² الْعَدَبُ, "Training"; and hence, as the result of training, good education; good manners; polite accomplishments.

³ وَأَحْضَرَ, *lit.*, "and caused to be brought."

⁴ "Root" and "branch" are used figuratively. The idea is that a man can only temporarily overcome an evil in his disposition.

⁵ بِأَيْدِيهَا, "In their forepaws." All the paws would be أَرْجُلُ.

⁶ بِمَهْلٍ, (with acc.): مَهْلَةٌ "Respite, delay."

⁷ فَارَةٌ, as a noun of unity, "a mouse," applies both to masc. and fem.; but as the fem. of فَارٌ, it applies to a female mouse only.

foot, he went before the king. When the cats advanced with candles in their hands, he let loose the mouse from his sleeve, and the cats, seeing it, threw down the candles and chased the mouse, and the house was nearly burnt down. The minister exclaimed, "See, O king, how nature overcame training and the branch returned to its root." He said, "Thou art right : excellent is thine understanding!"

STORY No. 112.

It is said that *Ibrāhīm*, the son of *Mahdī*, once concealed himself ¹ from *Al-Ma'mūn* in the house of an old woman, who said to him, "I will devise a trick ² for thee to obtain a little money." He said, "All right." So she went to *Al-Ma'mūn* and said to him, "If I conduct thee to *Ibrāhīm*, the son of *Mahdī*, how much wilt thou give ³ me?" He said, "I will give thee a hundred thousand dirhams." She said, "Send ⁴ with me a messenger and command him to obey me in all that I direct him, and give to him a thousand dinars so that he may give them to me when I show him the face of *Ibrāhīm*." So he sent with her *Husayn Al-Khādīm*, ⁵ giving him a thousand dinars, and instructed him as she had stipulated. Then she took him to a mosque, in which was a large box, and said to him, "Get inside this box," but he declined. She said,

¹ خَفِيَ : "To be hidden ; disappear": أَخْفَى, "To hide," trans. :

خَفَى, "To hide oneself."

² اِخْتَالَ فِي, "To devise means for the bringing about of something."

³ جَعَلَ, "To fix a reward : جُعَالَةٌ, "Reward."

⁴ بَرَّجَهُ, "To send" : وَجْهٌ, "Direction."

⁵ *Khādīm* added to a name means "Eunuch."

“Did not the Prince of the Faithful command thee to obey me ; how then dost thou refuse ? If thou wilt not do so, I will go away.” So *Husayn* got into the box, and she brought a porter, who lifted it and began going round with it in the streets and on the banks ¹ of the river. At one time *Husayn* heard the cries of the blacksmiths and, at another, the shouts of the boatmen. When it was dark ² she brought him into a house and opened the box and released ³ him. He found himself in a great assembly-room, in the centre of which was *Ibrāhīm* the son of *Mahdī*, drinking, while singing-girls were singing before him. So he fell on the feet ⁴ of *Ibrāhīm* and began to kiss them, and the old woman took the dinars from him. Then *Ibrāhīm* questioned him about *Al-Ma'mūn* and gave him the cup and he drank, after which he placed before him food and he ate. Then he gave him wine containing hemp, and, when he became overpowered, ⁵ he was put back into the box and locked up and carried to the “ Gate of the Populace ” and thrown down there. When day dawned, people saw the box and that there was no one with it. So they informed ⁶ *Al-Ma'mūn* of it, and the box was brought in and opened, and lo ! there was *Husayn Al-Khādīm* all insensible. ⁷

¹ شُطُوط, pl. of شَط, “ The bank of a river ” ; also, as here, “ any part of the riverside.” [twilight.]

² Lit. “ when the night became dark,” i.e., after the evening

³ وَفَقَحَتْ عَنْهُ ; note the idiom.

⁴ أَكَبَّ, “ He bent himself down ; stooped ” : أَكَبَّ عَلَى رَجْلِهِ, “ He fell prostrate.”

⁵ مَسْكَرٌ, “ To be intoxicated by wine or drugs.”

⁶ أَنَبَى إِلَيْ, “ To report the matter to ” ; lit., “ to cause it to reach one.”

⁷ مَلِيشٌ, “ Insensible from drink, or severe illness ” : colloq. مَلِيشٌ

He was treated until he came round, when *Al-Ma'mūn* said to him, "Hast thou seen *Ibrāhīm*?" He replied, "Yes, I swear by God, O Prince of the Faithful." The Khalifah said, "Where is he?" He answered, "I do not know," and he told him the story. *Al-Ma'mūn* exclaimed, "The old woman has outwitted us, I swear by God, and the money is gone."

STORY No. 113.

It is said that *Al-Hajjāj* ordered a man's head to be cut off. The man said to the door-keeper, "I wish to speak to the prince before he kills me." *Al-Hajjāj* said to him, "Say on." He said, "O prince, I wish not to speak to thee unless I walk with thee in thy hall, bound as I am,¹ from one end of it to the other; and there is no harm to the prince in this, and nothing will intervene between him and what he desires to do to me." So *Al-Hajjāj* took him to walk with him in the palace, and, when he came to the end of it, he said, "O prince, the generous have regard for the companionship of an hour: now I have been the companion of the prince in this walk, and surely he, most of all, should regard the right of companionship." *Al-Hajjāj* exclaimed, "Let him go his way, for, I swear by God, he hath spoken truly." Then he ordered a gift to be given him and the man went his way.

STORY No. 114.

It is said that a man was sitting one day eating with his wife, and they had before them a roasted² fowl. Suddenly

¹ كَتَّفَ : مَكْنُوفًا بِخَدَّيْهِ "Tying one's hands behind his back."

² مَقْرَبَةً, p.p. of يَكْرِى, شَرَى, "To roast (meat)."

a beggar¹ came to the door, and the man went out and turned him away harshly.² Now it happened after this, that the man became poor³ and his prosperity passed away. He divorced his wife and she married another man. One day the latter was sitting and eating with her, and they had a fowl before them, when suddenly a beggar knocked at the door. The man said to his wife, "Give him this fowl"; so she went out to him, and lo! it was her first husband. She gave him the fowl and then returned, weeping. Her husband asked her about her weeping, and she told him that the beggar had been her husband and then informed him of the tale of the beggar whom her first husband had driven away. He exclaimed to her, "I swear to thee by God, I was that very beggar."

STORY No. 115.

It is said that when *Mu'āwiyah* made *Ziyād** 'bn* *Umayyah* Governor of 'Irāq, the people were committing highway robbery and mischief in the land,⁴ and were given up to theft. So the first thing⁵ he did when he arrived amongst them was to go to the congregational mosque and ascend the pulpit and deliver a sermon. Then he added, "I swear by God, if any of you goes out after nightfall⁶

¹ سَائِلٌ, "A beggar, i.e., a poor man asking (يَسْأَلُ) for charity."

² انْتَهَرَ, "To chide, or address with rough speech."

³ اِفْتَقَرَ.

⁴ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِيهَا; the pron. in فِيهَا refers to الْأَرْضُ, although no mention of it is made. Cf. Qursān ii. 25.

⁵ أَوَّلَ مَا, adv., "as soon as."

⁶ عِشَاءً, "Nightfall." عِشَاءً, "Supper."

I will surely¹ take off his head. Now let those present inform those absent." Then he ordered a proclaimer to proclaim this in the country for three days, and when it was the fourth night *Ziyād* went out, when one-third of the night had past, and began going round throughout the country.² He came upon a herdsman who had with him sheep. *Ziyād* said to him, "What art thou doing here?" He replied, "I have come to this town³ and can find no place to rest in it, so I halted where I am until the morning, so that to-morrow, if God Almighty please, I may sell my sheep." *Ziyād* answered him, "Verily, by God, I know that thou art speaking truly, yet if I let thee off, I fear a report will be spread about concerning me, and it will be said that *Ziyād* says and does not act, and thus my government will be ruined and awe of me will disappear. Now for thee Paradise is best." So saying, he cut off his head, and went on thus in the night until he had destroyed⁴ five thousand and five hundred souls, and he put up their heads at the gate of his palace. Thus the people were awed and feared greatly on account of the things he did. When the next night after this came, he went out again and met three hundred men, so he cut off their heads, and after that no one could venture forth from his house after nightfall. When it was Friday he mounted the pulpit and said, "Let none of you shut his shop at night, and whatever is stolen I am responsible for it." Thus no one could shut up

¹ لَاخُذْتُ, with the energetic *nūn* (نون التأكيد).

² بِخِلَالِ الْبِلَادِ, "Round about the country"; here, the town and surrounding places.

³ الْبِلَادِ, *lit.* "the towns, as opposed to the country."

⁴ أَتَى عَلَى, "To kill; destroy."

his shop. Now there came to him after a few days a money-changer,¹ saying that the night before four hundred dinars had been stolen from his shop. *Ziyād* said to him, "Canst thou swear as to what thou allegest?" He said, "Yes," so he asked him to take an oath, and weighed out to him an equivalent of his money and directed him to conceal the matter. When Friday came, he addressed the people, saying, "Such and such² a money-changer had four hundred dinars stolen from his shop. So now ye are all present, and if ye restore this, the man will have got back his property; but if ye do not restore it, I have sworn³ to myself that not one of you shall be allowed to go forth from the mosque, and I will order you all to be slain this instant." Then they instantly seized a man notorious for theft and produced him before *Ziyād*, and the thief there and then gave back what he had taken. He ordered him to be crucified⁴ and the sentence was carried out on the spot. Then he asked what quarter of *Basrah* was devoid of security and fear of the law,⁵ and was told the quarter of the tribe of *Azd*. So he ordered a robe of brocade of great price to be thrown down in the middle of the street in this quarter, and the robe remained thus for several days, and none dared to lift it from its place. —I say, the evil deed he did to the herdsman and to other servants of God Almighty are no part of good government.

¹ يَصْرِفُ, syn. صَرَفَ, from صَرَفَ, "To change money."

² Read فَلَانًا for فَلَان.

³ يُوَلِّي, إِلَى عَلَى نَفْسِهِ, "To bind oneself by an oath to do a thing."

⁴ مَلَبَ, "To gibbet; hang and expose on a gallows."

⁵ يَهَابُ, هَابَ : هَيْبَةً, "To regard with dread, or awe."

How can it be otherwise when they are the essence of tyranny, and what tyranny can be greater than the taking of life? That man, his abode is hell, — and may God Almighty curse him, and curse *him*¹ that approved his deeds!

STORY No. 116.

The author of the "*Ḥayāt'l-Ḥayawān*"² has mentioned that when the lion once fell sick, all the beasts came to visit him except the fox; and the wolf told³ of him. The lion therefore said to him, "Inform me when he is present." The fox was told of this. When he came the wolf informed the lion. Then the lion said to him, "Where wast thou until now?" The fox replied, "In search of medicine for thee." He asked, "What didst thou light upon?" The fox said, "There is a small bone in the wolf's leg, which must be extracted by thee." So the lion implanted his claws in the wolf's leg, while the fox stole away⁴ from them. Afterwards the wolf passed him, bleeding, and the fox said to him, "O fellow with the red shoes, when thou sittest down in the company of kings, have a guard on what comest forth from thy mouth."⁵

¹ The Khalifah is here intended.

² The "Lives of Animals," a zoological lexicon, lately translated by Lieut.-Col. A. S. G. Jayakar of the I.M.S., and published in Bombay.

³ ^{نَمَّ} does not necessarily mean "to slander or calumniate"; it may mean, as here, "to split upon; inform against."

⁴ ^{وَانْسَلَّ}, "To slip away."

⁵ ^{مِنْ رَأْسِكَ}, *lit.* "from thy head."

STORY No. 117.

It is said, when *Qais*, the son of 'Aṣim, made a visit¹ to the Apostle of God (upon whom be the blessing and peace of God), one of the *Anṣār*² asked him (*Qais*) concerning what was rumoured with regard to girls being buried alive. So he told him that he never had a daughter born to him, but he buried her alive, adding, "I used to fear disgrace³ and had no pity on any of them, except on one little girl whose mother bore her when I was on a journey, and made her over to her sisters. So when I returned from my journey I questioned her about her 'burden,' and she told me she had given birth to a dead child, and she concealed the matter (of the girl) from me⁴ until several years had elapsed and the girl grew up and blossomed.⁵ Then one day she visited her mother and I came in and beheld her with her hair plaited, and her locks tied up in a net, and she had arranged over it Venus-shells⁶ and put over⁷ it a string of onyx. I said to her, 'Who is this maiden?' for indeed her beauty had pleased me. Her mother wept and said, 'This is thy daughter.' Then I let her alone until her mother was not on the watch. Then I took her forth one day and dug for her a grave, and put her in it while she kept on saying, 'O my

¹ رَدَّعَ, means "To come to visit a prince or great personage, especially from a distance.

² The *Anṣār*, or Helpers, were those inhabitants of Medina who befriended *Muḥammad* when he fled thither from Mecca.

³ الْعَارُ Abstract nouns take the definite article in Arabic.

⁴ كَتَمَتْ حَالَهَا.

⁵ وَنَبَعَتْ : نَبَعَ in the sense of "to bloom" is post classical.

⁶ رَدَمٌ, "The small shells called *cowries*."

⁷ يَلْبِسُ, يَلْبَسُ, "To clothe or cover with."

father, what art thou doing? Tell me, I implore thee'¹; and I continued throwing the earth upon her, while she went on saying, 'O my father, art thou covering² me with this earth and leaving me alone, and departing from me?' I went on throwing earth over her, until I had concealed her and her voice ceased. Now that one—regret for her is still in my heart." Then the eyes of the Apostle of God shed tears,³ and he said, "Verily this is hardness of heart, and he who shows no mercy, to him shall no mercy be shown."

STORY No. 118.

It was said to *Qais*, the son of *Sa'd*, "Hast thou ever seen anyone more generous than thyself?" He answered, "Yes; we alighted once in the desert at (the tent of) a woman, and when her husband came, she said to him, 'A guest hath alighted at thy place.' So he brought a camel and killed it, and said, 'It is at your service.'⁴ When the next day came, he brought another and killed it, and said, 'It is at your service.' We said, 'We have only eaten a little of what thou didst kill yesterday.' He said, 'I only give my guests fresh meat to eat.' Thus we remained some days, while the sky was raining, and he continued acting like this. When we were about to leave, we placed a hundred dinars

¹ بِحَقِّكَ, *lit.* "By thy right of father; as a father."

² Read مَنَطَ for مَنَطِي.

³ دَمَعَتْ, "To be filled with tears (the eye)."

⁴ شَأْنَكُمْ, in the acc. being the obj. of a verb understood (إِشْأَنُوا),
 "Do whatever you like with it."

in his tent, and said to the woman, 'Make our excuses to him,' and we set out. When the day was advanced,¹ a man came crying out behind us, 'Stop, ye mean riders, ye have given us the cost of our hospitality.' Then he came up to us and said, 'Take them or I will strike you with my spear.' So we took them and went our way."

STORY No. 119.

It is said that 'Alī (with whom may God be pleased), preached one day and said in his sermon, "O servants of God, Death! Death! there is no escape from it. If ye stay at home, it seizes you, and if ye flee from it, it overtakes you; death is knotted in your forelocks.² So escape! escape! and haste! haste! for behind you there is a swift pursuer and that is the grave; ah! and the grave is a garden of the gardens of Paradise, or a pit of the pits of the Fire. Listen! it speaks thrice every day, saying, 'I am the house of Darkness, I am the house of Desolation,³ I am the house of Worms.⁴ Verily, there is behind you that (terrible) Day, a day in which the child turns grey and the old reels,⁵ and every mother suckling shall forget what she is suckling,⁶ and every woman with burden shall cast her burden, and thou shalt see men

¹ ^{رَفَعَ} ^{النَّهَارُ}, "The day became advanced, the sun being somewhat high."

² The forelock is the only part of the head that is not shaved.

³ ^{وَحْشَةً}, "loneliness."

⁴ ^{دُودٍ} pl. of ^{دِيدَانٍ}.

⁵ Through horror, *lit.* "is drunk."

⁶ ^{مَا لَوْضَعَتْ}, *lit.* "What she is nursing," *vide* Qur^{ān} xx. 2.

drunk and yet they are not drunk, but it is merely that the punishment of God is severe. Verily, after that Day is a Fire whose heat is fierce and whose bottom is far distant, and whose mountain is iron and whose water is pus. No mercy has God on that day!" The narrator continues, "At this the Muslims wept bitterly, so he added, 'Verily, after that Day there is a Paradise whose breadth is the heavens and the earth, prepared for the godly. May God protect us and you, from the tormenting punishment.'"

STORY No. 120.

It is said a certain man of letters went to the gate of *Ma'n*, the son of *Zā'idah*, who made him a promise and kept putting him off until his resources were exhausted. His heart was distressed at this and he resolved to depart from his gate. So he wrote to him verses to this effect:—

Of which of the two conditions shall I speak¹ of thee, for I shall be questioned on my departure.

Shall I speak of kindness received? There is no proof of it on me. Who will then believe what I say?

Or (shall I speak) of the other?² but thou hast not merited this, for thou art the doer of every noble action.

The narrator adds, "When *Ma'n* read this, he called him and apologised to him and ordered ten thousand dirhams to be given to him."

¹ *أَتَنِي* ^{يُنِي}, is "to speak well of a person," and also "to speak ill,"

but the first meaning is the more common. Arabs say *أَتَنِي عَلَيْهِ* ^{خَيْرًا} and *أَتَنِي عَلَيْهِ شَرًّا*.

²—of the other, i.e., the opposite of *حَسَنِي*, viz., that he is wanting in generosity.

STORY No. 121.

It is said that *Al-Hajjāj* preached one day at great length,¹ and a man rose up from among the people and said, "It is time for prayers, O *Hajjāj*! Time cannot wait for thee and the Lord will not excuse thee." So *Al-Hajjāj* ordered him to be imprisoned, but his people came to him (*Hajjāj*) and alleged that he was mad and asked him to set him free. He said, "If he acknowledges being mad, I will let him go." When this was told him, he said, "I take refuge with God, I will not say that God has afflicted me, when He has made me of sound mind." When this reached *Al-Hajjāj*, he forgave him on account of his truthfulness. And excellent is he who has said :—

"Keep to the truth, though truth burns thee in the fire of threats.

And seek the pleasure of God,² for the most foolish of men is he who angers the master and pleases the slaves."

It is also said, "Truth is the pillar of religion and the support of learning and the root of friendship, and these three things are only complete by means of it." The Prophet (on whom be the blessing and peace of God) hath said, "Beware of falsehood, for falsehood leads to sin, and sin leads to Hell; and keep ye to truth, for truth leads to virtue, and virtue leads to Paradise." A certain philosopher has also said, "He whose truthfulness is small, his friends are few"; and another⁴ has said, "If truth were given a form it would be in the form of a lion; and if falsehood were given a form it would be the form of a fox."

¹ وَأَطَالَ, *lit.* "and he preached long."

² مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ = "Heaven forbend"!

³ By speaking the truth.

⁴ بَعْضُهُمْ *lit.* "one of them."

STORY No. 122.

Al-Aṣma'ī has said, "I saw *Sa'dūn*, the madman, sitting at the head of a drunken old man, driving away flies from him; so I said to him, 'How is it that I see thee sitting over this old man?' He said, 'He is mad.' I said, 'Art thou the madman or is he?' He said, 'No, he is.' I said, 'How so?' He said, 'Because I prayed the noon and evening prayers with the congregation, and he has prayed neither with the congregation nor alone.'¹ I said, 'Hast thou composed anything on this?' He said, 'Yes':—

'I have left wine for the people of wine,² and I now drink pure water: I saw that wine degrades the noble, and withers fair and comely³ faces. Suppose wine be permissible for youths, what excuse is there for it when grey hairs appear?'

I said to him, 'Thou hast spoken truly,' and I went my way.

STORY No. 123.

It is said that *Zubaidah* reproached *Ar-Rashīd* for his loving *Al-Ma'mūn* and not her son *Al-Amīn*. He said to her, "I will now show thee my excuse." So he summoned her son *Muḥammad Al-Amīn*. Now he had with him some tooth-sticks and he said to him, "What are these, *Muḥammad*?" He said to him, "Tooth-sticks."⁴ He then sent for *Al-Ma'mūn* and said to him, "What are these, '*Abdullah*?' " He said, "The opposite of thy virtues, ⁴ O Prince of the Faithful." *Zubaidah* exclaimed, "Now has thy excuse been made plain to me."

¹ فُرَادَى "One by one."

² i.e., for those who drink it.

³ مَلِجٌ and مَبَاحٌ, pls. of مَلِجٌ and مَبِيعٌ.

⁴ The word "*masūwīk*" means both "tooth-picks" and "thy evil deeds, vices." An example of both *kināyah* and *ta'nīs*.

STORY No. 124.

It is narrated that a certain king had a *Shāhīn*¹ falcon to which he was greatly attached, and one day it flew away and alighted in the house of an old woman, who caught it. And when she saw that its beak was crooked she said, "This cannot pick up grain." So she cut it with scissors. Then she noticed the length of its claws² and said, "I think, too, that it is unable to walk." So she cut them also, and she worked her will on it out of compassion as she thought, and destroyed it by the very things by which she thought to benefit it. Then the king offered rewards to the man who should bring news of the hawk, and they found it with the old woman and brought it to the king. When he saw its condition, he said, "Take it forth and proclaim over it 'Such is the fate of whosoever allows himself to fall into the hands of those who know not his value.'"

STORY No. 125.

It is said, when *Al-Ma'mūn* succeeded to the Khalifate, the Life of *Abū-Bakr* (with whom God be pleased) was pointed out³ to him, and at the end of it were the words, "He used to take revenue from right sources and spend it justly." The Prince of the Faithful answered, "We cannot do that." Then was pointed out to him the Life of *Umar*, with whom God be pleased, and at the end of it came, "He used to take revenue from proper sources and spend it justly." So the Prince of the Faithful replied, "We cannot do that." Then was pointed out to him the Life of *Uthmān*, with whom

¹ *Shāhīn* P. Ar. pl. *shawādhīn*, a term applied to either the Shāhin falcon or to the Peregrine.

² *Lit.* "its claws and their length."

³ *عرضت عليه*, i.e., "proposed to him as an example to follow."

God be pleased, and at the end of it came, "He used to take revenue from proper sources and spend it justly." The Prince of the Faithful said, "We cannot do that." Then was pointed out to him the Life of *ʿAlī*, whose face God bless, and there came at the end of it, "He used to take revenue from proper sources and spend it justly." The Prince of the Faithful replied, "We cannot do that." Then was pointed out to him the Life of *Muʿāwiyat* ʿbn* Abī Sufyān*, and at the end of it came, "He used to take revenue from rightful sources and do with it what he pleased." He exclaimed, "If I am to follow a lead, it is this."

STORY No. 126.

It is said that *Ar-Rashīd* collected together four physicians, an *ʿIrāqī*, a Greek, an Indian, and a countryman,¹ and said, "Let each of you describe a medicine for preserving health."² So the Greek said to him, "The medicine which is the preservative of health is the berry of white pepperwort," and the Indian said, "Hot water," and the man of *ʿIrāq* said, "Black cardamoms." Now the countryman was the most acquainted of them all with the delicacy of the stomach, and when he was asked,³ "What sayest thou?" he replied, "The medicine to preserve health is that thou shouldst sit down to food when thou hast an appetite for it, and get up from it while thou hast still an appetite." A man of learning has also said, "I asked a Persian physician, saying, "We are

¹ سَوَادِي, A native of the سَوَاد, "the grain country of *ʿIrāq*."

² *Lit.* "The medicine to be taken without disease," i.e., which taken in health prevents disease. (The words do not mean "the medicine in which there is no harm.")

³ *Lit.* "He said to him 'what sayest thou?'"

a people who travel abroad and thus our climates change,¹ so prescribe for us wherewith we may treat ourselves." He said, "Abandon all medicines and keep ye to seasonable food, and milk and honey,² and keep ye to eating flesh, and drinking the water of the vine³ and entering the bath, and wearing linen."

STORY NO. 127.

Abū Dulāmah, the poet, went in to *Al-Mahdī* one day and saluted him, and then sat down and bathed his eyes in tears.⁴ The Khalīfah said to him, "What is the matter with thee?" He said, "*Umm* Dulāmah* is dead." The Khalīfah said, "Verily to God do we belong, and verily to Him do we return,"⁵ and felt compassion for him on account of the grief he witnessed. So he exclaimed, "May God make great thy reward, O *Abū Dulāmah*," and he ordered a thousand dirhams to be given him, and said to him, "Help thyself with this in thy misfortune." So he took them, and blessed him, and went. Then when he had entered his house he said to *Umm* Dulāmah*, "Do thou go and ask leave to go before *Al-Khayzurān*, the handmaiden of *Al-Mahdī* and when thou hast entered to her, do thou pretend to weep and say, '*Abū Dulāmah* is dead.' " So she went and asked permission to see *Al-Khayzurān*, and she gave her leave. And when she had rested herself, she began weeping.⁶ So she said to her, "What is the matter

¹ *Lit.* "Waters, i.e., climatic conditions—due to water."

² *Lit.* "What issues from the cow's udder and from the bee."

³ ماء الكرّم "Water of the vine, i.e., wine."

⁴ *Lit.* "and let down his eyes (like a curtain) in weeping:" a good idiom.

⁵ Qur'ān, ii. 151. A formula used by Muslims when in affliction and especially at death.

⁶ *Lit.* "She let loose her eye in weeping."

with thee?" She said *Abū Dulāmah* is dead." So she said, "Verily to God do we belong and verily to Him do we return. May God give thee a great reward"; and she felt pain for her and ordered her to be given two thousand dirhams. So she blessed her and went. Not long after *Al-Mahdī* came in to *Al-Khayzurān*, and she said, "O my lord, hast thou not heard that *Abū Dulāmah* is dead?" He said, "No, my dear; it's his wife *Umm* Dulāmah* that is dead." She said, "No, I swear by God, none but *Abū Dulāmah*." He said, "Glory to God! ¹ he went out from before me just now." She said, "And she left me just now," and she told him of her tale and her weeping. So the Khalifah laughed and expressed wonder at their tricks.

STORY No. 128.

Aḥmad 'bn* Bakr Al-Bāhilī* has related, saying, the chamberlain of *Al-Mahdī* narrated to me, saying, "*Al-Mahdī* one day said to me at midday, 'Go out and see who is at the gate.'² So I went out and beheld an old man standing. So I said to him 'Hast thou any petition to make?' He said, 'I can inform no one of it except the Prince of the Faithful.' So I left him and went in and said, 'There is an old man, to whom I asked, 'Hast thou any petition to make?' and he said he would inform no one but the Prince of the Faithful.' Then I said, 'Is he to enter?' He said, 'Yes, but order him to be brief.'³ So I went out and said to him, 'Go in and be brief (in thy petition).' So he went in and made the

¹ *سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ* here an expression of astonishment. "Good heavens!" Also used for admiration.

² i.e., "what people are waiting with petitions."

³ *تَخْفِيف* *lit.* "To be light; not to be burdensome."

formal salutation, ¹ and then said, 'O Prince of the Faithful, we have been ordered to be brief'; and he began to say:—

'If thou desirest we will be light and so will be like a feather; when a breath ² tosses ³ it into the air it soars away.

And if thou desirest we will be heavy and so be like a rock, which sinks when thou throwest it into the depths of the sea.

Or, if thou desirest, we will merely give greeting and so be like a traveller, who leaves after performing the duty of saluting thee."

The narrator continues, "Al-Mahdī laughed and said, 'Nay, thou wilt be honoured and thy request will be fulfilled.' So he fulfilled his request and ordered ten thousand dirhams to be given to him."

STORY No. 129.

The scholar *Abū Ya'qūb* has said, "I was sitting with *Ma'n*¹ 'bn² *Zā'idah*, when I noticed that he was wearing an *izār*⁴ worth only four dirhams. He said to me, '*Abū Ya'qūb*, this is my *izār*, and yet I have this year⁵ made a distribution

¹ سَلَّمَ is to salute by words: سَلَّمَ بِالْخَلِيفَةِ *lit.* "Saluted him in the words with which *Khalifahs* are saluted."

² *Lit.* "breaths": أَنْفَاسٍ pl. of نَفْسٌ. The pl. of نَفْسٌ "soul" is نَفُوسٌ.

³ حَوَمَةٌ "The main part of the sea the part where there is most water."

⁴ إِزَارٌ "A wrapper for covering the lower part of the body; a *loongee*."

⁵ عَامٌ pl. أَعْوَامٌ. The difference between مَسَّةٌ and عَامٌ is that the former is twelve months reckoned from any day of the year, whereas عَامٌ is "a winter and a summer."

amongst thy tribe alone of forty thousand dinars.' The narrator continues, "Now, while we were talking together, he suddenly beheld from an airhole which was there,¹ and which overlooked the plain, a desert Arab trotting along.² So he said to his doorkeeper, 'If this man is coming to us, admit him.' The Arab entered and saluted, and began saying:—

'May God preserve thee! little have I in my hand and I cannot support my family now they are many.

Time, which has thrown itself³ on me is pressing me hard, so they have sent me to thee and are waiting.' "

The narrator continues, "*Ma'n* was much agitated and said, 'Have they sent thee and waited? Hie boy! what has become of such and such a mule of ours?' He said, 'It is here.' He said, 'How much is on her?' He said, 'A thousand dinars.' He said, 'Give⁴ them to him'; and then he said to the man, 'Go to them with what thou now hast, and when thou art again in want come back to us.' "

STORY No. 130.

Al-Attābī has related, saying, "I went in before '*Abdullāh*'-*'bn** *Tāhir*, when he was about to start for Egypt, and I said, 'Peace be to thee, O Prince.' He said, 'And peace be on thee and the mercy of God and His blessings'; and then he said, 'What is the matter?' I said, 'Two lines of verse

¹ *Lit.* "An airhole of his."

² *Lit.* "Trotting in his walk."

³ *وَمَيَّ بِكَالْكَهْ* *lit.* "thrown, or cast, its breast," i.e., "pressed itself against."

⁴ *Lit.* "throw"; *طَرَحَ*, *بَطَرَحَ*.

over which I exercised my mind last night.' ¹ He said, 'Bring (say) them,' and I thereupon said :—

'The certain expectation I have of thee, and the certain trust that God hath accustomed me to place on thee have brought me to thee this morning.

What can be better than the high trust which has made my camels gallop to thee ?' "

He said, 'Thou hast done well, by God. Boy, give him thirty thousand dirhams'; and, continues the narrator, I swear by God the boy reached my place with it even before I did. So when the morrow came, I went again before him and said, 'Peace be unto thee, O Prince.' He answered, 'And on thee be peace! What is the matter?' I said, 'Two lines of verse on which I exercised my mind last night.' He said, 'Hither with them,' so I said :—

'My face is enough to tell thee of my need, and my appearance saves thee from my asking thee.

How can I fear poverty while thou livest for me? Thy hand is to me a treasury of wealth.'

He said, 'Thou hast done well, by God! Boy, give him thirty thousand dirhams'; and again the boy reached my place with it before I did. So when it was the third day, I went in again and found him with his foot in the stirrup. I said, 'Peace be to thee, O Prince.' He answered, 'And on thee be peace! What is the matter?' I said, 'Two lines of verse on which I exercised my mind last night.' He said, 'Repeat them,' and so I said :—

'Verily the best of garments is made old by time, but the robe of praise is a robe ever new.

Clothe me with what perishes (may God preserve thee), for I robe thee with what does not perish.' ²

¹ البَارِحَ masc; "The *day* that has passed": البَارِحَة fem. "the

night that has passed": from بَرَحَ "to pass."

² بَخُلِقَ, أَخْلَقَ "To wear out; to make old."

